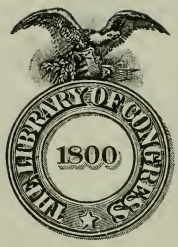
In Memoriam.

L. M. Capron



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MEMORIAL

OF

SAMUEL MILLS CAPRON,

Born May 15th, 1832.—Died Jan. 4th, 1874.

EDITED BY

J. H. TWICHELL.

Rari quippe boni: numerus vix est totidem quot
Thebarum portæ vel divitis ostia Nili.

JUVENAL.

HARTFORD:
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TO THE PUPILS OF

SAMUEL M. CAPRON,

TO WHOM HE FREELY GAVE

THE STRENGTH OF HIS LIFE,

AND WHOSE WELL-DOING AND ASSURED AFFECTION

WERE HIS BEST EARTHLY REWARD,

THIS MEMORIAL IS DEDICATED

BY THE EDITOR.

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

BY

THE REV. W. B. CAPRON,

Of Máná Madura, India.

UXBRIDGE, MASS., March 18, 1874.

MY DEAR ——:

Instead of preparing an introductory chapter, as you suggested, for the memorial of my brother, it would be easier and more natural to me to write you some account of his early life, or, rather, of his life on the home side, and let you use what you think best.

Among the precious things treasured up in memory from his death-bed, is his message to his mother—"If I do not see mother, she knows that I love her. I have had a world of enjoyment at home, a world of it." I dare say that you will find in this simple-hearted and affectionate message a part of the secret of his happy and useful life. There are thousands of happy Christian

homes in New England, and thousands of Christian young men and young women go forth from them to fill places of usefulness for which they are fitted, and to which Providence calls them. Happy the parents whose children respond to their love, and fulfil their fond hopes; and happy he, who, finding a sphere for which he has been carefully prepared, and where he is appreciated and esteemed, turns back with gratitude to the hand, which, more than any other, guided him through the perils of youth, and hardly let go of him when he became the loved and trusted leader of others.

My brother was born in this town, the birthplace also of our parents,* and the home of our childhood, the 15th of May, 1832. He was christened Samuel John Mills,—a name which I remember to have suggested and struggled for—and oh! the proud satisfaction when that missionary name was fairly adopted into the family.

And Samuel's childhood was in beautiful correspondence with his saintly name. The then recent conversion of both father and mother, in the revival of 1831, and their deep interest in the church and Sabbath school, and in all moral and religious enterprises, are sufficient to account for Samuel's early interest and enthusiasm in all such objects. He was the little preacher of the family. Standing in a chair near the

* William Cargill Capron and Chloe Day. Father is trying to prove his descent from Donald Cargill, the martyr.

kitchen window, and with his basket of books on the folded table at his right, he would go through a public service in the most serious manner—prayer, reading of the scriptures, singing, preaching, the benediction, every part complete, and, as the phrase is, all well sustained from the beginning to the end. His clear and earnest voice still rings in his mother's ears, "Oh Lord, send down thy Holy Spirit to-day." A looker-on would have thought it strange that a child of three, or so, could read, but though his eyes followed the narrative, and he turned the leaves accurately, it was only a recital of what his quick memory had caught from the frequent reading of others. He would often go to his father's place of prayer, and soon after, when his little whip was missing, it would be found by the side of the chair where he had knelt to pray. When reproved for going to the river side, and told that he might fall into the water, where he had been cutting sticks, he replied, "No, I shan't, I have been praying." No doubt the little books which he read brought the praying children through all right, and he did not doubt that the same would be done for him. His mother remembers that in his father's absence, when with so many men at the table, she was not quite equal to the duty, Samuel pleaded to be permitted to ask a blessing. She remembers his fidelity at private prayer, and how troubled she was on account of his exposure to the cold in this way before retiring at night. He loved none of his

books so much as his little leather-covered Testament, which he read much, and had filled with slips of paper as book-marks. Whenever he found anything about the power or love of God, he could not rest satisfied until he had shared it with some one else, and many a time he followed his mother about the house till she could stop and listen to his newly-discovered treasure.

The temperance reform took a strong hold of his feelings, and he was indulged in being permitted to attend the meetings when almost too young to take care of himself. Once, he said, he was waked up by falling off the seat, long after the meeting had closed, and found that he was locked in, and had to escape through the window. At another time his father sought for him, as he did not return in season, and found him among those who had gathered about the lecturer after the meeting. He had become possessed of a dollar in some way, and was subscribing for a temperance paper.

His interest in religious things took him to all special meetings, and glad was he when he could accompany his father to conferences and other gatherings, where he hoped he might be converted. A few weeks before his death he was telling his children that when he was a little boy he heard of a revival of religion in Providence, and he teased so hard to go that his father and mother put him aboard the stage, and sent him off alone twenty-one miles to be converted. "But I was not

converted then," he said. This romantic incident, and perhaps the disappointment, are easily explained. He had an uncle and aunt in Providence, to whose care and Christian good judgment he was sent, and as safely entrusted as if he had been at home. He found his way to the meetings, and was found among the inquirers, and told his errand. But the good minister, or good brother, who heard it, had his balance upset by the story, and could not resist the temptation to thrill the audience with the announcement that here was a little boy who had come all the way from Uxbridge to Providence to be converted ; and having thus done what he could to dispel the influences of the Holy Spirit from the mind of his young inquirer, he probably concluded by asking the Christians present to pray for him.

Samuel always referred his conversion to the period when he was a member of Phillips Academy, at Andover, Mass., the last year of his preparation for college. As every new history of a conversion is instructive, I quote a few sentences from his letters in reference to that event. "Could you believe me if I told you I hoped I had found the Saviour? When I came back after vacation I did so with the determination that, with God's assistance, I would become a Christian before the term should close. The second Sabbath in the term I spent in a very thoughtful manner. It was the last day of the year. Prof. Park, who had not preached for two years before, preached that day. The sermon in the

afternoon on ' What is time,' (text, Rev. 10, 6,) was the best I ever heard. It was after hearing such a sermon that I sincerely hope I gave my heart to God. In the evening one of my class-mates called in to see me, and encouraged me, so that I began to hope that I had truly met with a change."

On the following Tuesday evening, it appears that he *came out* in a prayer-meeting of the students. Two months later, he writes, " How blessed is it to have a hope in Christ ! Would that I could find language to express in any feeble degree the joy which I have experienced within a few weeks. I have felt a joy in the service of Christ which I never dreamed of before." He wrote his mother (Feb. 27, 1849) that he had been serious for a long time, and that when he came to Andover he felt that, unless he selected proper companions, his religious feelings would soon vanish, and that he became intimate with none of whose character he was doubtful. This, he said, had much to do in leading his thoughts to things of the highest moment. He united with the church in Uxbridge in the following September, his church relations being transferred to the Center Church, Hartford, in September, 1853, and to the Asylum Hill Church in August, 1866.

Samuel's boyhood was remarkable for some firm and lasting friendships. He had a sincere and honest interest in the welfare of his friends, and the boys who turned to him as a congenial spirit, and those who

found in him a refuge from the various discomforts and persecutions of that somewhat awkward age never forgot him to the end of life. It is indeed surprising how many, including not only the intimate friends of college and of his subsequent life, but also those who had known him best in boyhood, have written since his death that they had lost in him their best-trusted and most valued friend.

The completion of my college course found father in circumstances which would prevent his giving to both his other sons the advantage of a college education. With prudence and a union of forces, one could be put through. Which should it be? If the question had been left to be decided by lot, it might well have been a matter of painful anxiety. My father took the course of offering the prize first to the elder, who considered it, and declined it in favor of his brother, and who since, in his natural pride at Samuel's career, has had the luxury of thinking that there is, after all, a blessedness in giving instead of receiving.

Samuel was so well along in his studies before leaving the Uxbridge Academy, that one year of instruction at Andover—that senior year, under Mr. S. H. Taylor, which none of the graduates of that institution forget or fail to appreciate—was sufficient to give him a good preparation for Yale College, where he entered at seventeen years of age, in the Fall of 1849.

College life passed very pleasantly, no doubt. With

a good preparation and with a naturally well-balanced mind, study came easy to him. Though specially well fitted in the languages he had a taste for the mathematics, and found a luxury in branches which so many students consider dry and uninteresting. It would appear that he took a high rank in his class, with only reasonable fidelity to study—a result which I refer to his unusual power of application of the mind to books, or to the thing in hand, from his very childhood. Especially in childhood it was an absorption which caused himself and others occasional trouble. When buried in his books he seemed oblivious to all noise and confusion. A dozen persons might pass through the room without attracting his attention, and if he was wanted, it took a second or third call to rouse him. Strangely enough, such concentration of mind and an excellent memory are not inconsistent with occasional forgetfulness—a misfortune which, in his childhood, probably, and also in later life, sometimes precipitated him into trouble. But much as Samuel enjoyed college life, as his room-mate and very intimate friend of those four years would probably testify, he lived much at home. In his Junior year he writes, "Although I am surrounded with all the advantages and pleasures of college life, my thoughts wander home very, very often, and I sometimes wish *almost* that I had never left that good old place." "It is pleasant to be here, but it is nothing like the calm, sweet enjoyment of the family circle."

No subject occupies his letters so much as the flower garden and the fruit. The beautiful plan of the garden is his, and the schemes for its improvement occupied pretty largely his summer vacation, and went far over into the Fall. Then it was barrels of apples from home —better than any fruit that could be bought in Connecticut, (and quite likely more expensive,) and one would suppose that no event of college life was so important. I have seen no allusions in his letters to college honors, or to his prizes, though some volumes of mathematics and classics, containing the president's autograph, turn up in his library.

A desire to help himself to some extent, and perhaps a fancy to make some preliminary experiments in teaching, led him to accept, for the most of his Junior year, a position in Mr. Russell's school, which occupied his time for several evenings of the week, and somewhat on the Sabbath. It is only worthy of mention here, because he there discovered the secret of school government, which served him in after years, and upon a much more important stage. It was a basis of thorough and accurate scholarship, interest in the welfare of his pupils, and an affectionate but not undignified familiarity, fairness but firmness of discipline, and an unsleeping fidelity to his duty as an instructor. Not that he was so egotistical as to put anything of this sort on record, but one can infer it all from his familiar letters home. He tosses off a mathematical

problem, proposed to him by a pupil, and discovers afterwards that it was intended as a test of his ability. He is facile in translation, and finds that none of these off-hand efforts are returned to him.

He was interested also in the spiritual welfare of the pupils. He says (June, 1852), "I am now so well acquainted with them all, that I can occasionally speak to them upon the subject of religion. There are some well-disposed boys, who seem only to lack the one thing needful, and have very good ideas about religion too. I hope that some of them may be led to Christ." But his extra duties proved too burdensome to him, and he dropped them at the end of Junior year.

It was at this period that the question of a business for life naturally came up, and it is very pleasant to me to find that he had some queryings at least as to his duty to the heathen. In the letter last quoted from he writes, "The most intimate friend* I have here in New Haven expects to go as a missionary to the Armenians, and urges me very hard to go with him. Do you think it may be my duty to go? As the case stands now, I shall probably never study theology, but he wishes me to go as a teacher. You know that the schools among the Armenians are already far advanced, and they will soon have colleges there." He writes in July, "I do not have any desire to be a doctor or a lawyer, and

* Probably Mr. Harding, now missionary of the A. B. C. F. M., in Bombay.

hardly any to be a New England minister, so that I think I shall fall back on my original plan, and try to make a teacher. I like that profession very well so far, and I think I could do tolerably well in it."

If his name seemed to hint a missionary life, it was, after all, a prophecy not unfulfilled. It was my own boyish enthusiasm for missions that had given him the name, and now, twenty years later, I had been started out of my forgetfulness, I trust by the Spirit of God, and was about to exchange a most delightful home and sphere in Hartford for service in the foreign missionary field.

In August, 1852, I resigned the post of master of the Hopkins Grammar School, to take effect at the end of the following term, intending then to join the Theological Seminary, at Andover, where I had already entered my name. Before the end of the term, however, the trustees of the grammar school had fixed upon Samuel as my successor, and, rather than that he should leave college, I remained in Hartford till his graduation, in the Summer of 1853, and he succeeded me in the Fall.

It is not for me to narrate the events of those twenty years of laborious and prosperous school life in Hartford. I left him in the High School building, on Asylum St., in charge of the old Grammar School, and the classical department of the High School, and on my return from India I found him at the head of both

schools, in the new and splendid building on Hopkins St., which is deservedly a monument of his enterprise and perseverance.

The ten years spent as master of the Grammar School were comparatively unbroken, except by two seasons of severe illness. In September, 1863, borne down by the weight of affliction, he resigned his position, and sailed for Europe for an absence of a year, returning in November, 1864.

This was in the midst of our civil war, and at the period of the most alarming depression of the currency. His resignation had not been accepted by the Trustees of the Grammar School, but feeling that the funds of the school, though affording a fair salary in ante-war times, would not now give a comfortable support, and being urged to engage in the business of manufacturing, he left Hartford and removed to his native place. It should be said, also, that he had brought from Europe a stock of vigorous health, which his previous experience made him disinclined to risk in the confinement of school teaching.

But the subject came up again, and in a new aspect. After a time he was followed to Uxbridge by a committee of the High School, who contemplated a reorganization of the school, and urged him to accept the post of principal—a post of much more than his former influence and responsibility, and now attended with an offer of nearly double his former salary. This made

him take the subject again into consideration, as if a new taking up the question of a business for life, and the result was that he resolved to give himself again to the business of teaching. He had spent the winter in Uxbridge, and returned to Hartford in April, 1865.

This was at the close of the war, and, the times favoring, the High School took a new start. Pupils poured in, and it was not long before we heard that the building on Asylum St., one of the best for its time, was too strait for the occupants. Business also was increasing, and the site was too noisy for a school, not to say that it was worth much more than the original cost and expenditure for business purposes. The result was the sale of the old home of the High School, and the erection of the present building, begun in 1868, and completed in 1869, at an expense of $160,000.

On his first coming to Hartford from college Samuel was received into the family of Rev. Dr. Hawes, where I had found a home for six years, or nearly the whole period of my residence in the city. But with the purpose, as we have seen, of taking up teaching as a profession, he was soon looking for a home of his own, and a very youthful, almost childhood friendship having sufficiently ripened, he married Miss Eunice M. Chapin, in November, 1854.

And Samuel was most happy in his home. All the blessings with which a busy memory surrounded the home of his childhood, were realized over again in

his own home at the cottage in Hawthorn St. Children were born—Helen Maria, in March, 1858, and Alice Louise, in March, 1862. It is the painting that hangs now in the sitting room. But the pictures from their father's pen, as we received them in India, were even more beautiful. It has often occurred to me that, if an *incognito* were possible, I should like the privilege of publishing some of those letters under the title, "Home Scenes from Overland Letters," or, "Nellie's Life, as gathered from the Home Letters of a Missionary." You know the sequel—that fatal visitation of scarlet fever—but in order that you may know Samuel better, let me quote from his own account, written two weeks after the children's death :

UXBRIDGE, January 25, 1863.

MY DEAR BROTHER,

Nellie and Alice lie side by side over in the cemetery. We laid them down to rest amid a violent storm. The sky was black with clouds, which poured torrents of rain upon us, and the wind blew a gale. Oh how gloomy and desolate was the scene. It was "the land of darkness as darkness itself."

But, blessed be God, it was all bright above. Up through our tears, and through the thick, overhanging clouds, we could see heaven opened, and our loved ones safely at rest there. Nellie gave us all the evidence that we could desire in one so young, that she tenderly loved her Saviour. She called herself "Jesus' little lamb," and listened to no stories more intently than to those about Him. As to Alice, of course we cannot doubt that she has gone up to Him who said, "Suffer the little children to come unto me." Strange as it may seem, I had already become persuaded that Alice would develop a beautiful Christian character. This was not merely because we had consecrated her, as we believed, entirely to Christ, and were hoping to train her up for

His service, but I had observed already such traits of character that I could not help feeling and saying to E——, that I believed she would make an uncommon Christian if she lived.

Two sweeter children, it seems to me, were never given to any parents, and I feel profoundly grateful that we had such unmingled joy in them so long. Nellie was most truly a "sunbeam" in our house. She hardly knew what it was to be unhappy. During the two months that she spent at Whitinsville, though she longed to see mamma and papa, yet she was buoyant and cheerful all the time. She was thoroughly obedient, ardently affectionate, inexpressibly kind and tender, and withal bright and very sociable. Almost every day, the moment my head appeared above the brush by the railroad bank, the cottage door would open, and those dear little feet would come scampering toward me, carrying a little body which was a perfect picture of health and joy. Then, as I bent over to take her, she would clasp her little arms about my neck and kiss me, oh, so sweetly, and there she would cling until I set her down again on the doorstep. Meantime she would be telling me, as briskly as possible, the news about home, what her kitties had been doing, or what callers there had been, and inquire what I had brought, and what was the news about the war. In two minutes my cares and troubles about the school vanished, and I gave myself up to domestic happiness.

Her affection for Alice was truly remarkable, and I had anticipated a world of pleasure in seeing those two sisters grow up together. They were widely different in their characteristics, but seemed peculiarly adapted to each other. Their separation seemed so dreadful that, when Nellie left us, I don't know but I wished that Alice might be with her.

* * * * * * * *

You know that one of our chief objects in moving into the city was that Nellie might attend the Sabbath school and church. Mrs. Brown had enrolled her name. Nellie had been anticipating it for months, and the next Sabbath after she was taken sick was to have been her first as a scholar in the infant class.

Then Nellie was to hear Mr. Calkins' sermon to children, and it had been all arranged that at the time of the next sermon Alice should be

baptized, (Mr. Calkins' first baptism,) and Nellie was to occupy one of the settees in front of the pews, where she could see everything. Oh, how she would have enjoyed it! Instead of that, about an hour before Nellie's funeral, she was carried in her casket into the room where Alice was supposed to be almost dying, and there, with a little circle of friends standing about, sweet Alice was baptized. The service was somewhat formal, but more impressive on that account, as we were obliged to respond aloud, "I do," when Mr. Calkins asked us if we gave her entirely up to God.

So, too, we had been anticipating the pleasure which Nellie would take in all the comforts of the new house, and she was with us just long enough to show how much she would have enjoyed it, and how cheerful she would have made it for us. Those two days were bright days. She caused us to observe at once the wonderful change which her presence made, as her clear voice and elastic step were heard everywhere. Her little soul was overflowing with joy, and she went caroling about, making us all happy.

But undoubtedly the time was well chosen. She had been in the house just long enough to make herself pleasantly associated with every part of it, but not as at the cottage. There every spot of ground in the beautiful yard seems to be hallowed by some reminiscence of her, and the cottage was where she first began to waddle from one chair to another. We feel very grateful that we are not there now.

* * * * * * * *

You may be ready to think that it was well she was removed from us, because we were so proud of her. If this be so, we are not at all conscious of it. * * * That we *loved* her too well is more than possible, and perhaps God has taken her to Himself in order to draw our own affections up thither.

Yet I cannot but feel that we had sincerely given our children entirely to God, to do with them as He should deem best, and I bless His name that from the first of their sickness He has enabled us to feel fully resigned to His will. The rod falls upon us, indeed, with crushing weight. Our treasures are taken from us. Our fondest hopes and favorite plans are dashed to the ground.

* * * * * * * *

But it was ordered, for some good purpose, that we should be left

alone, to mourn the loss of all who could address us by those endearing names, "Mamma" and "Papa." (Nellie, by the way, gave a peculiar fascination to those words. She had a way of saying them which went straight to our hearts, and called out our tenderest affections.) * * * Yes, it was ordered in wisdom and in love. "I was dumb, I opened not my mouth; because thou didst it." Surely if we cannot confide in our Heavenly Father, we are without any refuge. We can but say, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him." But the past will never be reproduced again. Henceforward we shall keep our eyes fixed upon the heavenly hills, for we have "laid up treasures" there. Our feet will hasten on to the stream which separates us from our precious children; too eager, I fear, at times, to press the farther bank.

It is wonderfully comforting to feel, as we do most fully, that Nellie and Alice are really happier now than they could have been here. The change has been no loss to them. When Nellie was suffering intensely with the terrible disease, her piteous moans pierced me, like so many spears, with real agony. But when I saw a placid smile spreading over her sweet face, as she drew her last breath, I felt an unexpected and inexpressible relief to know that she was at rest, beyond the reach of sickness and pain.

* * * * * * * *

And here it flashes upon me that I shall have no occasion again to tell you how the dear children are.

Well, these mysteries will be explained sometime, and we shall be led to adore the wisdom and love and grace of our blessed Master.

This letter discloses to us something of the struggle in the tender heart of the father, between parental grief and Christian faith. He was determined that his heart should be right, but in the first agitation of bereavement he little knew what spirit he was of. And perhaps it is often so, when observing friends report of the bereaved that they seem to be wonderfully sustained. The summer found Samuel broken down in

health and spirit, and hence the resignation of his position in the Grammar School, and the trip to Europe. It was a year of busy recreation, and sight-seeing, and study, but through all that period the heavy cloud of sorrow hung over him, darkening his path, and hiding the benevolent face of his Heavenly Father. And though Christian faith prevailed at last, such was his disappointment that his prayer—and what he felt sure was believing prayer—had not been answered in the recovery of his children, that he reconstructed his theory of prayer, and for years held that our petitions for temporal blessings should be confined chiefly to those of a general nature, and as to specific temporal wants, though we might confide them to God, it was not well to urge them, or lay any stress upon them, as if in such things the prayer of faith could change the course of His providence. This is the theory of disappointment and submission, rather than of a childlike trust, which would run to our Heavenly Father with every request, little and large, and expect Him to grant it if He can. Still he was pondering and learning, and only a short time before his death he had a conversation with a very intimate friend on this subject, and, I think, had his doubts cleared up, and was led back to views for which he was very grateful. The first sentence of his message to me, a day before I was permitted to enter the sick room, was, "Tell B—— that I believe in prayer." It would have sounded

strange but for the evident allusion to a conversation which we had last summer upon prayer for specific temporal blessings.

On the trip to Europe Samuel had the company of his wife and sister, and of other relatives and friends, making a party of eight at the outset, though he stayed beyond them all. They sailed from New York in the Great Eastern, Sept. 8, 1863, arrived at Liverpool the 20th, and in Paris the 29th. Remaining in Paris through the months of October and November, they spent December in the south of France, including three weeks at Nice, and crossed the Alps to Turin and Genoa. Then it was two weeks at Naples, and two months at Rome, Florence three weeks, and so on, and May in Switzerland. He then proceeded to Liverpool, to send Mrs. Capron and his sister to the United States, and himself turned back to Germany for four months' study of the German. This time was spent chiefly in Halle. He took a German steamer for New York about the middle of October, and reached Hartford in November, in season to vote for Mr. Lincoln, for his second term.

He was disappointed only on this trip by the loss of a visit to England, which had been postponed to the visit to the Continent, but it was made up by a most delightful visit to Great Britain and Ireland, with three of his pupils, in the summer vacation of 1871.

I have already alluded to Samuel's disposition to

retire from teaching on his return from the year in Europe. He was in vigorous health, and might hope to preserve his health better by a more active life. His neighbors and fellow-townsmen received him with great cordiality, and with certainly a greater manifestation of interest than awaited him in Hartford, and they were much disappointed at his decision to leave them again after those five months at home.

The last nine years spent at the High School are those by which he will be best remembered in Hartford. But his experience as an instructor had been largely gained in those previous years in the Grammar School department, where his time was wholly devoted to teaching the classics. At that time, indeed, he had almost the whole work of classical instruction to do personally—from the paradigms to the final review—and he felt more secure of the preparation of his pupils for college than was possible with never so good assistants, but the divided responsibility of subsequent years.

And the change for him might have been a dangerous experiment, after ten years of confinement to the classics (and an Andover fitting) if it had not been that he had naturally an enthusiastic love for mathematics and the sciences. But he took up astronomy with greater ardor than Virgil, and though he had declined some urgent requests to edit volumes of the classics, the state of his health only kept him from volunteering

the preparation of a text-book on astronomy. But, with his fidelity to the ordinary duties of school, he never could have endured the extra labor of publication. I suspect that the compilation of that little book of school lyrics was sufficiently laborious and vexatious to warn him off from the fields of authorship. There was, indeed, no other field of authorship that tempted him in the least, except that of school books. When mentioning to Mrs. Capron that she might find in his desk papers which seemed to have been carefully prepared, he added that they were on no account for publication. "Writing," said he, "was never my forte."

As his intimate friend, you have for years been familiar with his happy home life, and if you had not been, that letter about Nellie and Alice, though so full of sorrow, would disclose the fact, as it must have been, when children again appeared on the scene. Clara Day is now nine years old, Bertha Chapin six, and William Cargill four—all too young to appreciate their loss, though perhaps all will remember him.

Although I spoke of Samuel as coming home from Europe in vigorous health, he was never what you would call rugged and strong. Both his foreign trips were of immense service to his health, and he had come almost to depend on a sea voyage, longer or shorter, in the summer vacation, to recruit him for the duties of a new school year. It now seems unfortunate that he failed of this in both of the last two summers. Still he ap-

peared less prostrated last summer than usual, and none of us apprehended that he would not go through the winter with at least his usual health.

It is too late now for regrets, or we might wish that he had favored himself somewhat when he found that he was going beyond his strength. For instance, he was quite unfitted for the exposure to the cold in star-gazing, with his class in astronomy. He hardly reflected that while the class came by sections and remained but a little while, he had two or three times as great exposure, because he stayed through.

It was at such an exercise, one night about the 1st of December, that he caught a cold which he never shook off. A common cold, indeed, with him was a pretty serious matter, especially in winter, and in term time, and after the anxiety and care of illness in his family. Ten or twelve days later, as he was struggling toward the end of the term, the teachers advised him to give up and lie by a few days, and he remained at home nearly the whole of the week preceding Christmas week, and thought that he had the better of his cold. On Monday of Christmas week he returned to school, having girded himself for the last two days of the term and the closing examination, and came home to the well-appreciated luxury of a vacation to be sick in. Thursday was Christmas. He enjoyed the festivities of the day with his family, and his next older brother and wife, barring only the severe cold. It seems now

the fatal mistake that on Friday, a raw, chilly day, he started down town to pay some out-standing bills for the High School, in order to clear off the last obstacle to a free and easy vacation. He seems to have walked the whole way because he did not dare to expose himself to the danger of taking more cold in the street car, and the result was, that when he returned, his feet, as he said, were like ice, and his lungs were on fire. That very night he felt that it was his last sickness. Mrs. Capron writes that "when that dreadful pain came on in his side, he said, 'Oh, E., this is a *fatal* stab. I never had anything before like this.' He continued very ill all night, though he had times of relief from severe pain."

The next day, when, on the second visit of the doctor, the disease was pronounced pneumonia, he had already made arrangements for supplying his place in the school, and had sent Mr. Hall several messages about school matters. When he knew the doctor's decision, he said, "I have not strength to battle with pneumonia. I know I shall not live."

It is easy now to see that his apprehensions were well founded, and that the disease which had seized him with such tremendous power, scarcely loosened its hold upon him until he relinquished his hold on life. On Tuesday morning the doctor seemed to hope that the fever was broken, and again, at the end of a week from the attack, on Friday evening, January 2, the

doctor went home in evident hope that the disease had taken a favorable turn. But it was the delusion of but a very few hours, and Saturday morning assembled us by such startling news of a change for the worse, that the most of us lingered at his bedside, or in the vicinity of the sick room, till the end. It was the first time that I had seen him. I wish that you had had the same privilege ; and, now that we know the result, I cannot but wish that we could have had the same freedom to speak of death that he had.

You will not infer that his apprehension of a fatal termination of the disease was of the nature of fear. He was the calmest and least agitated of all in that sick room. Mrs. Capron writes that on Sunday afternoon he wanted to talk with her about dying, and when she could not conceal her agony at the thought, he said, "I know it will be terrible for you, terrible. How gladly would I spare you the sorrow if it were possible, but I think we had better talk about it now we are alone. We may not have another opportunity." And then, in words which are, doubtless, treasured up in precious memory, he alluded to their happy life, and his sorrow at parting from her and the dear children, but assured her that death had no terrors for him—that all was peace and joy. "It is no more for me to die," he said, "than it would be now to rise from the bed and walk out the door of this room." He spoke to others of his prevailing peace. To me he said, speak-

ing very slowly, and with difficulty, "I want to say that my mind has been perfectly at rest. I am willing to leave it all with the Lord. When I think of the separation from E——, it is dreadful, of course, but the Lord will take care of her." At the same time he said, "I have had doubts now and then, about this and that, but they are all gone now." In no distrust of his peace of mind, but rather to draw him out, I said, "You don't put any confidence in a good life, or anything of that kind?" "Not a bit of it," he replied, with manifest disgust. "But only in Jesus Christ as the Saviour of sinners?" "That's it," he replied. He said at another time. "I want to hand down to my children the testimony of my strong personal faith in Jesus Christ."

Mrs. Capron mentions of the earlier days of his illness, that "he loved to have some one pray with him often, and to hear passages of Scripture. He often repeated the 23d Psalm, and the hymn "Rock of Ages." The two lines—

> "Nothing in my hand I bring,
> Simply to Thy cross I cling;"

he loved to repeat over and over again.

He left affectionate messages for some of his friends —for you and others of the church; for the teachers of the High School, "Tell them I always loved that old High School;" for Mr. Johnson (Chairman of the High School Committee), "Tell him that he has made everything very pleasant for me in my position." All

that week he spoke often of his dear children, and every night they came in for dear papa's good night kiss. Saturday night they came as usual, but this time it was not "good night," but "good bye, my darlings, good bye; be good children. I shall go *home* Sunday."

He had estimated very correctly the time of his decease, and in a very serious manner suggested that for the last half day of his life, when it was not possible to change the result, opiates and stimulants should be entirely omitted, in order to leave his mind clear, and not needlessly protract the scene. "But," said he, "I have told you what I should like, and you must do what you think best." Such attention was paid to his wish that his mind was unclouded to the end, or, rather, till consciousness ceased.

The doctor came at about eight o'clock on Sunday morning, but Samuel did not observe him, and was fast passing into unconsciousness. Rubbing his chilly hands, so as to warm them before feeling the pulse of his patient, the doctor said in a clear voice, "Good morning, Mr. Capron." "Good morning," was the reply; the last words of our dear one on earth, and a half hour later, (at twenty minutes before nine) he had opened his eyes to the brightness of a Sabbath morning in heaven.

Very affectionately yours,

W. B. CAPRON.

SAMUEL M. CAPRON,

THE MAN AND THE TEACHER.

BY

MARGARET BLYTHE.

THE attempt to transport a person whom we have known out of the realm of life into that of literature, is always a difficult one. But perhaps one never feels so keenly the imperfection of the correspondence between words and the thoughts which they represent, as when he tries to convey to another the idea of some exceptionally symmetrical and well-balanced character. He feels a difficulty like that of the portrait-painter who should essay to make a characteristic and spirited likeness of a faultlessly regular face. The picture would be better if the subject were less beautiful.

No one can write of Mr. Capron without fearing that his words will read like an ideal sketch of the perfect man. Of all the men whose lives were ever written, this is he whom his biographer would least desire to

overpraise. Living, he loved the truth, and shunned applause; the voice would be unfriendly that should affront his ashes with a eulogy misplaced. Yet words truly spoken of him, let them be guarded how they may, will seem to praise him out of reason. Nor can one action of his life be named,—far less can the sum of his work be reckoned,—unless one should speak of that matchless character which his friends would gladly leave to be its own remembrancer; for what he did was the result of what he was, and what he was, was still the measure of what he could do. It is not always so. Many a time the teacher, the poet, the preacher, is greater than the man: but he, who surpassed other men in so much, was above them not least in this, that he was more real in all his qualities than they. His teaching was himself.

He was not a teacher of genius, if by genius is meant a development of one faculty at the expense of others. He was great as the head of a school through the same qualities that would have made him great anywhere else. If he had been in business, he would have understood that business so much better than anyone else that he would speedily have become necessary to it. If he had been the colonel of a regiment, he would have been deeply feared, passionately loved, and intrepidly followed by his men. If he had been a prime minister, he would have been the mild unconscious autocrat of his cabinet.

Most eminent teachers have had one quality in common: a vivid enthusiasm, joined to a power of expressing it which at times amounted to an inspiration. In Miss Lyon this characteristic was combined with an overpowering sense of spiritual things. In another woman, scarcely less distinguished, but, happily, still living, it is re-enforced by personal beauty, strong magnetism, and a sympathy always warm and vital. In Arnold of Rugby it was united to an exceptional loftiness of mind.

If this be a law, Mr. Capron was an exception to it. His enthusiasm was a deep, smouldering heat. He could communicate it through the subtle channels of conduct; he could feed it by prompt, unselfish action: the one thing he could not do was to express it in words. His addresses to the school were admirable for precision, clearness, and temperance; they were rarely instinct with fire. When he spoke on subjects of importance there was an almost comic disproportion between his unimpassioned words and the feeling they represented, that sometimes provoked a smile of loving amusement from those who knew him best. But this, which would have been a defect in any other man, became in him the source of a certain power. When people habitually allow for some peculiarity of mind or manner in others, it is in the nature of the case that they should often allow too much. Let it once be understood that a man never says as much as he

means, and he will frequently be supposed to mean many things that he never thought of. Thus Mr. Capron's known reticence gave to his lightest word a weight of which he was not himself aware. His praise and blame sank into the mind, and were remembered for years. "Mr. Capron never praised me but once," says one to whom life has certainly not been unkind since then; "I wrote some Greek on the board, and he said it was well done. That was more to me than all the little successes I have stumbled upon since."

All his methods were marked by the simple and quiet habit of his mind. He never wasted words or provoked unfruitful discussion. A stranger to him and to the school was standing with him one day when a scholar came up to prefer a request. It was a young man from one of the upper classes, who wished to be dismissed for that day at an earlier hour than usual. It was the sort of case in which custom demanded a note from the authorities at home, and no doubt the applicant knew that, but being of a sanguine turn, had probably hoped to carry his point by sheer audacity. He put his request with an air of much confidence, stating his case at some length and with great fluency. Mr. Capron—who had probably a hundred things to do at that moment, in different parts of the building—showed no impatience, and did not interrupt the orator by so much as a look; only, when the tale was ended, he dropped out quietly, and as it were accidentally, the

words : " You must bring a note." The phrase was so brief, the tone so matter-of-course, that the spectator of this little scene took them for entire assent, and never guessed that they meant refusal, till she caught the blank discomfiture in the petitioner's face. Not another word was spoken, and it did not seem to occur to either party that another was needed. Sometimes this peculiarity of manner made Mr. Capron a little formidable to people who did not know him well. New scholars of a timid disposition, going up to him for the first time to relate their own misdeeds, would occasionally be thrown by it into a state of terror the more ludicrous as he was quite innocent of the effect he produced, and kindly set their agitation down to remorse. If he would have blustered, or even argued, they would have known what he meant, but the calm, the silence, the attention, were ominous, and suggested thunder.

Much of the impression of finality that attended Mr. Capron's decisions arose from that keen sense of justice which in him amounted almost to genius. Expediency, of the shuffling and paltering sort, did not enter into the counsels of his mind. He applied a general principle to individual cases with a uniformity which made it seem like a law of nature. Thus his processes, into which no occult motive entered as an element, could always be verified by those who were interested in the result.

This was simple integrity, nothing more ; and it was

not with him a calculation, but the necessity of his nature; but one must have seen something of the inside working of schools, to know how much friction may be saved by mere honesty. Under Mr. Capron every scholar became, to a certain extent, his own judge: if his wishes were thwarted, he might be dissatisfied with the structure of the universe, and the general constitution of things; he rarely blamed his principal.

Yet no man was less servile to routine. Exposed, especially at certain seasons, to ceaseless importunities from scholars and their friends,—compelled hourly to deny, to grieve, to disappoint,—wounded through his tenderness and his compassion,—he seized eagerly upon any reason which justified him in relaxing rule. So long as it appeared that a case, however great its hardship, could not in fairness be taken out of the general category, entreaty might distress, but could not move him; once let it be shown to be in the smallest degree exceptional, and he was not only ready but anxious to show indulgence. Only those who possessed his intimate confidence knew how much he suffered from the necessity of inflicting pain that was often laid upon him.

Once it chanced that one of his teachers was called into the room where he was holding a conference with the mother of a boy who had somehow come in danger of the council. Nobody knows, now, exactly what he had done, or was likely to suffer; probably nothing worse

was threatened than a month's suspension ;—and the mother had come to intercede. It was the old, sad history ; she was a widow, she had nothing but this boy, she had made great sacrifices to keep him at school, and now he would lose a month, and probably his place in his class, and all would be for naught. She told her story with piteous tears and heartbreaking detail ; it was only a boy going to be suspended, but it was like the end of the world to her. Mr. Capron was very gentle, very patient, but quite inflexible. Pressed with other business as he was, he let her talk and cry, and begin her story over and over again, but he could not give her any hope. It would appear from the story that the conscience of the culprit had anticipated justice, and that his offence had not yet been brought officially before Mr. Capron, for it is remembered that he said : " If the case is as you state it, I see no reason for making it an exception." Here the teacher, who had been set down at a corner of the table to get up the statistics of the matter, pointed out a slight technical flaw in the case against the boy, which did not at all diminish his real fault, but of which Mr. Capron might take advantage to reprieve him, if he chose. He caught at the suggestion ; his set face brightened ; he straightened himself, pulled the papers to him across the table, ran over the statement with his miraculous speed and certainty. In two minutes it was all settled ; the mother was drying her eyes and going

out at the door, and Mr. Capron was shutting it behind her. When she was fairly gone, he turned round with a bright look of intelligence and sympathy that he had sometimes for his friends, and exclaimed, "Well! that was a good thing, wasn't it?" ending with one of his rare cordial laughs, full of relief and happiness. It put him in spirits for the rest of the afternoon. It is a pity to be obliged to add that the delay proved of no use, and that in the fullness of time the unhappy young scapegrace was suspended all the same.

Most people who greatly influence others have recourse in doing so to means more or less circuitous. Indirection is God's own way with us, we are told, and assuredly there is nothing ignoble in choosing to rule by those gentle and unforceful methods which often demand from those who use them so large a sacrifice of pride and temper. Yet even innocent contrivance looked like trickery when it was set beside the straightforwardness of Mr. Capron's habitual dealings. Both the strength and the weakness of his nature unfitted him to govern by any sort of circumlocution. His courage would have revolted at it, even if he could have found the diplomacy it required. But there was no disdain in his choice of a method, if that can be called a choice which was instinctive with him. He could only move in straight lines, but he would have been the first to acknowledge that the arc has as good reason for existing as the chord. He would have said that he lacked

tact for roundabout ways ; and it was true that his tact was mainly such as his kindness taught him. His way of gaining a point with you was usually to state the case in hand exactly as it was, to explain what he thought would be best for all concerned, and to take it for granted that you could have no other desire than to do the really best thing. If he thought the general good required some sacrifice on your part he said so, as simply as if selfishness had been a lost art. In weaker hands, this method might have failed ; it was curiously successful in his. If he sometimes lost a battle for want of strategy, his victories were doubly valuable, because they were victories of two. He did not stir you up to a glow of generosity, as some people might have done, but while he talked in his unexaggerated, prosaic way, you forgot yourself if you were ever so selfish, and suddenly it seemed the only natural, the only possible, thing to forego your own wish for the common benefit. It was the sheer, downright weight of character and example. His life was so consistent that it formed an unbroken chain, and the whole force of it was felt at every point.

But though he expected the public interest to be paramount with everybody, it would be a mistake to suppose that he habitually sacrificed the scholars to the school, or that his interest in them was merely professional. Every pupil is so much the most important object in the world to himself, that it is not easy to

astonish him by the interest you take in him. The best proof of Mr. Capron's minute and personal care for his scholars is the fact that it did astonish some of them. Of ten who should be asked what most struck them in him, five would probably reply: "The time he was willing to devote to my personal affairs, and the memory he had for them, both while I was in school and after I had left it."

Those who most valued Mr. Capron wondered sometimes what it was in him that inspired his scholars with so deep a respect for his abilities. It was not scholarship, for the great mass of them never met him in the class-room. His addresses to the school were remarkable only for directness and simplicity. It could not all be an impression filtering down through the senior class, always a small and exclusive body. Yet the least and last urchin of the fourth class would speak of him with awe as "a smart man." So far as this estimate is to be ascribed to any one quality in him, it was, doubtless, due to his extraordinary executive faculty. In all the daily exigencies of the school, the thousand-and-one questions, involving a host of conflicting interests and remote considerations, all endlessly complicated with each other, which come up for the principal's decision, he was never at fault, never flurried, never uncertain. Perhaps it was not alone by reason of the singular lucidity of his mind, but partly also because he had never tampered with his convictions, that his judgment

in all such matters was so sure and rapid. Through the mass of side issues and accidental circumstances that enveloped it, he pierced at once and with certainty to the real differentia of a case. His practical wisdom was like an inspiration. "I don't agree with Mr. Capron on this point," said a teacher, himself mighty in counsel, "but I hope he will settle the matter in accordance with his own judgment, for experience has taught me that when I differ from him I am sure to be in the wrong." The view of a subject which dawned upon others after long reflection was very likely to be the first that occurred to Mr. Capron. His wonderful rightness of mind showed him things in their true aspects from the first; and then all his intellectual processes were exceptionally accurate and quick. His mind was of an eminently serviceable order. All its powers lay ready under his hand. The multiplicity of cares could not confuse, fatigue could not cloud that tranquil intelligence. He did everything as if he had nothing else to do. A hundred threads ran through his hand, and none were ever tangled or broken. The care of his own classes was the simplest of his tasks. In conducting a recitation as it is done in the High School, a teacher is obliged to carry on simultaneously a number of distinct trains of thought. Having put a question, he must attend to the answer, assign to it a mathematical value out of ten or twenty possible marks, correct errors, frame the next question, select

the next scholar, all at once, keeping meanwhile a general grasp of the subject, and a general hold of the class, and a general eye to the lapse of time, besides minor matters. When to this was added the care of a session-room, most teachers found it enough, and were apt to be blind and deaf to external things. Mr. Capron appeared to give an undivided attention to his recitations ; he was never absent, never careless ; yet the more general concerns of the school never suffered, and he had senses all over the building.

He could not always understand why other people could not do what seemed to him so simple. There was a faucet in the building, which, being adroitly set, used to produce a lugubrious wheezing, snoring, and groaning, unlike the agonies of any other water pipe ever known. It was not a very exquisite joke to waken this music, but it was one perennially fresh to the schoolboy mind. Age could not wither it, nor custom stale its infinite variety. I speak, of course, not of the school in general—most would have disdained so infantile a trick—but of that residuum of idleness and stupidity which always exists in such a body. Whenever this was done, Mr. Capron used to have it stopped, and so it happened that, though the teachers had all heard the sound, their attention had never been called to it. But one day when Mr. Capron had been away attending some committee meeting or other, he came in and found that it had been going on, heaven knows

how long. Nobody had thought of doing anything about it; indeed, I am certain some of the teachers supposed it to be a legitimate noise, as inevitable as the steam-whistle. There was a class reciting in the first session-room Mr. Capron came to; the presiding officer was fathoms deep in her subject, and started when he spoke at her elbow. "What wonderful people you all are!" he exclaimed, not impatiently, but with a sort of amazement; "think of your all sitting and listening to that, and never thinking of stopping it!" He said no more, and doubtless the circumstance, being but a transient ripple upon a general surface of unruffled order, soon passed from his mind. But it is a mark of the difference between him and other men, that the memory of his annoyance and of her own neglect lingers painfully to this day on the mind of the person he addressed. It was very unusual indeed for him to say so much in the way of blame; the school was so perfectly organized, and those who taught in it desired so earnestly to do their duty, that it was difficult for anything to go very far wrong; so that partly it was the rarity of the event that made it memorable; but more it was that in all who had to do with Mr. Capron there woke an implacable conscience that did not know how to forgive a lapse in fidelity.

Mr. Capron was far above petty espionage, and indeed the tone of the school was so high that there was little need of police service; but when any disorder

did occur, he was wonderfully quick in divining its precise nature, and in singling out the guilty persons. He was so rarely at fault, that when he was so he did not quite know how to take it. One day, during the noon intermission, a kitten strayed or was smuggled into the building, and some member of the senior class thought it would be an admirable witticism to shut it into the desk of a fellow-student. He expected, of course, that it would soon be discovered and expelled, and never meant the joke to trench upon study hours; but as ill-luck would have it, the owner of the desk did not arrive until the session had begun, when, finding himself embarrassed by this unusual piece of furniture, and not knowing what else to do with it, he somehow contrived to convey the hapless little beast into the bookcase, where a door ajar concealed it from the principal, while revealing it to everybody else. Any creature but a cat would have jumped down and run away, but this perverse animal made itself quite at home on the narrow shelf, blinking comfortably at the world between its naps, and occasionally taking a stately walk, with a majestic sweep of its tail at the turn. This sight was naturally too much for the class. Attention flagged; covert smiles passed about. The principal scented mischief; he glanced about, gave a failure or two for slight offences, merely on general principles, and by way of lowering the barometer a little, but he could not make it out. Seeing that he

was somewhat annoyed, the class, who were devoted to him, came up after school and told him all about it. He smiled propitious and remitted the failures, and the same evening told the story, with some glee and some contrition, for having, as he said, lost patience. The incident was such as might have happened any day in any school ; the only remarkable thing about it is that it was so long and so vividly remembered, both as a solitary and astounding break in the awful decorum of the senior class-room, and also because it was so unusual for Mr. Capron to be in any degree perplexed or baffled.

He was not only very shrewd in detecting a trick, but very ingenious in good naturedly turning the tables upon its authors. As the scholars would themselves have expressed it, it was not easy to "get ahead of him." This wisdom of the serpent in one so gentle and sedate, and otherwise harmless as a dove, affected people prone to laughter with a comic sense of surprise. In the senior room of the old building on Asylum street there used to be a parlor croquet table, or a cue alley, or something of that sort. This game was much affected at one time by the juniors of that year ; it was a passion, a furor ; at every recess the balls would begin to roll almost before the bell had done sounding. As there was a chronic feud between the senior and junior classes, of course the seniors scorned this amusement on principle, and cherished as their particular

fetish a pair of boxing gloves, armed with which their athletes were wont to spar. It happened that Mr. Capron had a recitation in Greek, which for want of time he used often to prolong into the morning recess, and as the class complained that they could not hear his explanations for the clicking of the mallets, he requested the juniors not to begin playing until this recitation should be over. Through some misunderstanding, however, the juniors, who were the best disposed class in the world, did not attend to this injunction, and the annoyance went on, unobserved by Mr. Capron, who was not very sensitive to small interruptions. Those dignitaries, the classical seniors, not unnaturally conceived this to be an affront to Mr. Capron, and more especially to the dignity of the senior class; so by way of vindicating lawful authority, in some secret hour they privately sequestered the balls. I think they were carried about in somebody's pocket for a week or two, both for safety and also for greater commodity in producing them, should they be peremptorily demanded by the authorities. At first the juniors bore their wrongs in silence, but when a reasonable time had elapsed without bringing back the balls they grew impatient, and finally some one complained to the principal. It was just one of those cases where it is undignified and unwise to do anything, and almost impossible to do nothing. Mr. Capron did not promise to interfere, and made very little answer of

any kind to the complaint; but in the course of a day or two the boxing gloves in their turn unaccountably disappeared. Of course the juniors were instantly accused of having hidden them; it did not occur to any one to suspect Mr. Capron, until, being casually asked one day if he had seen the gloves, he gravely replied that "he could not say, but he thought they would probably come back when the balls did." This solution, which had all the simplicity of genius, so tickled both parties that if it did not heal the feud, it at least soothed it for a season with a wholesome balm of laughter. In justice to the seniors it must be said that their manly hearts disdained to be worsted by these tactics, and that they kept the balls a few days longer on principle.

Ah, how pleasant the old memories are! and how thick they crowd on each other! He who was the soul of it all seems alive again while we remember how he looked and moved among us, and what words he said. But none of these things reveal him. We waste ourselves in words upon what was but external; we do not reach the heart of his mystery. Because he was strong, skillful, wise, he could create a school; how was it that he fashioned men and women? How was it that, coming within his circle, the untrained stupid natural creature became a living soul? What can we say, but that Virtue regenerates those who look upon her? "It was not anything he did that impressed us,"

says one of his scholars, "he just was in the room and lived with us." He never said that law is divine, and that work is healing, but he was himself an embodied order, a living diligence. He did not say that he found life serious and levity unworthy, but somehow to those who lived with him it seemed deeply important to do right.

Still less was it his habit to speak of the religious faith that lay deep and untroubled in the silent places of his heart. With all his science, his reading, his knowledge of the world and the world's thoughts, he held it simply, like a child. Unbelief did not exist for him, not even as an adversary; it provoked him to no heat, it found in him no sympathy; he passed it by. He knew neither the doubt that sneers nor the doubt that weeps and prays. He did not tell these things, but we knew them; and while we looked on him, we too believed. His spirit was reflected in a hundred ways, transmitted through a hundred minds, and that was the school.

Thus his direct influence upon his scholars was, after all, but a fraction of his aggregate power. He multiplied himself through his teachers; if he had been less to them, he could not have been so much to the school. So deep was his impress upon their own minds, and so durable his moulding force upon the conditions under which they worked, that those who served under him cannot even now separate that part of their success

which is fairly their own from that part which had its source in him. One of them used sometimes to stand where he could look over a railing and watch a great slow shaft that turned a thousand flying wheels. As he leaned and looked, he always thought of Mr. Capron. "The small wheels buzz and hurry; they seem full of business; and so they are, and in their place useful and necessary, like us; but the force is not in them." In the love and loyalty of his heart, he pleased himself with thinking so, not knowing, ah me! how near was the end of all. When the shock came, and the machinery all stood still, in our first consternation we could have wished that the world had ended with that throe; we thought we could not bear the familiar places, another in the master's seat, and the work from which the joy was gone. But life cannot end when we would have it; with many a painful jar we fit ourselves to the new conditions, and falteringly go on.

It has been said that Mr. Capron was not a great teacher by virtue of any special talent for teaching, but rather through abilities which would have enabled him to do many other things as well. So also, he was not a great leader through any mere knack at command. Some people are created by Heaven to govern us. Against reason and probability, and without visible effort, they subjugate people who may have a hundred times their wit and goodness. Perhaps this power is legitimate enough after its sort; and doubtless in some

inscrutable way it is for the good of mankind that it should be so often conferred on those in whom it can only serve more conspicuously to illustrate human folly; but however that may be, Mr. Capron's mastery was not of that kind. His successes were all genuine. We believed in him because in his province he was the ablest man we knew; we deferred to him because he was wiser than us all; we loved him for a goodness that was above this world. However accomplished a teacher might be in his own domain, he was very likely some time to discover that Mr. Capron was more at home there than himself; or if in some cases he lacked special knowledge, his easy grasp of a subject showed how readily he could excel in it, if there were need to try. Did he know how easily he was above us all? I think he never took time to find it out; it is certain that his advantage was less dear to him than for his sake it was to those over whom he won it. By him alone of all men it was pleasant to every one to be surpassed; and not the meanest or the vainest of mankind could have grudged him the victory which cost him so little, and of which he took so little heed.

This breadth of scholarship enabled him to give help and sympathy; it never tempted him to domineer and annoy. The air is not so free as he left his assistants in that which was their province. Thus unfettered, they were doubly bound; faith and honor were engaged that they would do their best. Not that he would have

hesitated to interfere, if it had been necessary. He knew perfectly what belonged to his office: he wore his authority lightly, with a careless strength; never ignobly or weakly. But he had no need to speak. So high was his own standard, so exquisite the finish of everything he did, that he was himself a perpetual admonition. His visits of inspection—when once you knew him—were all pure happiness. One never taught so well, with such ease and pleasant excitement, as when he sat by, a visible but a kinder conscience. Only sloth or incapacity could have been much afraid of that cordial neighborhood.

Mr. Capron may be said to have discovered the minimum of resistance which it is possible to excite in governing. With him, the natural difficulty of obedience was not complicated by any feeling of personal opposition. If this was true in regard to his scholars, it was doubly true of his teachers. However the principal of a school may possess the confidence of his subordinates, it would seem to be in the nature of things that there should be sometimes a conflict of opinions, a deliberate sacrifice of private conviction to authority. Mr. Capron, however, was an example to the contrary. In yielding to him there was no conscious submission: his way recommended itself as the best; his opinion had only to be stated in order to be shared. The deference which he commanded in meetings of the faculty might have been called servile, if it had not been so affection-

ate. He always invited free discussion, claimed but one vote, and yielded without contest when the day went against him; but his doing so was an occasion of consternation to the rest, so apt was it to be followed by disaster. An almost unanimous vote would sometimes be reconsidered and reversed in consequence of a decided opinion from him. But if his judgment had been more fallible than it was, his ascendant would hardly have been less. He bore rule so simply, so nobly, with such absence of self-will and self-assertion, that his wishes must always have been a law; and if he had lacked resources of his own, all that others possessed would have been willingly his.

His greatness of spirit was contagious. Where he was, harmony was a habit; magnanimity became a fashion. Among so many teachers, succeeding each other through so many years, not all could have been by nature noble; but most found grace to become or to appear so. In his generous presence, small jealousies, little rancors, could not live. "We have no family quarrels," said one of those teachers, long ago, with a gentle pride that belonged to her. The mere suspicion of such a thing roused Mr. Capron to a rare passion of incredulous indignation. "I never saw him really angry but once," says another teacher, "and that was with me. He thought I had been stirring up some petty dissension—about the division of work it was; and he was quite right to think so, although it was not true.

He fell upon me like the angel Michael—if I had not been innocent, I don't know what must have become of me. He begged my pardon within the half hour; he was very angry with himself; but for my part, I liked him the better for his wrath."

Mr. Capron's utterly impersonal way of treating matters of discipline, joined to the dryness of his manner, used sometimes to give the impression of coldness. "A machine for dispensing justice—that is what he seemed to me," said a scholar once. This impression rarely survived anything like a close acquaintance, and of late even comparative strangers ceased almost to feel it. He changed and mellowed very much in the last few years, as he was more and more appreciated; or rather he did not change, but that which represented him to us came to express him more truly. But he never learned to carry his heart upon his lips. He was always a man whom it was necessary somewhat to divine. Could he even have stooped to the art of popularity, it would have been a more difficult one for him than for another man. The doubtful quality called magnetism was not his. His manner afflicted many people with a sort of constraint. "I always think Mr. Capron is disapproving of me," said one. Yet there was a charm in his presence. It was not only the help he gave—it was not only that tangles were straightened and rough things grew smooth and hard things easy when he appeared. In himself he was a rest. There

was comfort in the very set of his shoulders, as he walked about the building. With him was no doubt, no uneasy distrust. His words might come short of his thought, but they never distorted it; the mind was not kept on the stretch to allow for small insincerities; you relied with certainty on his strength and kindness; if you were his friend, you also reposed in his fidelity. His goodness shone. His reserve, his silence, his occasional coldness and abruptness, could not veil its serene ray. Young and simple creatures, whose self-love was not hurt by his want of effusion, were especially susceptible to his attraction. Some one who cared enough for him to remember the little story, once happened to be with him at the house of a friend of both. This lady had two children, beautiful and intelligent boys, about three and four years old, who had never seen Mr. Capron. While the talk was going on, these little creatures stole into the room, and leaning up against their mother's lap, began to inspect the stranger, at first with shy and fugitive glances, soon with rapt forgetful interest. After awhile they gradually edged across the carpet to the sofa where he sat, and the younger and bolder laid a hand light as a leaf experimentally upon his knee. As he took no notice of this whatever, they next consulted each other by a look, and out of his intentness and gravity the elder broke into a sudden chuckle of ecstasy, instantly smothered by his good-breeding; for, tiny as they were, they were models of childish

deportment. This was the end of their hesitations. They were presently on the sofa beside him, climbing over his knees and his shoulders, twining under his arms, and rubbing their little soft faces against his cheeks, all without a sound ; while he calmly continued his conversation, his natural dignity quite unimpaired by these antics. The perfect contentment with this state of things which was evident on both sides, in spite of Mr. Capron's apparent unresponsiveness, was a comfortable and tranquilizing sight.

It was inevitable that such a man should be overworked. He never spared himself where the school was concerned, and in the end he sacrificed his life to it. His views of the duties of a principal were peculiar. If he was above all, it was, he thought, that he might to better purpose be the servant of all. If power was in his hands, it was that out of the common work he might gather to himself all that was heavy, hard, or disagreeable. Nobility obliged him. His unselfishness, indeed, was beyond reason. He needed a keeper; some affectionate and willful hand to take possession of work that never should have been his. He did a great deal of drudgery that others could have done as well, and from which his higher duties might fairly have exempted him. But he was so made that he did not know how to demand a labor that he did not share; and his determination was so strong and so quiet that it was not so easy to interfere as in our remorseful

thoughts we fancy now it might have been. Many a time we vowed to lean upon him less, not to consult him, to bear our burdens without his help; but habit and necessity were stronger than that resolve. He was a man on whom it was natural to rely. It was impossible to live with him and not to become dependent on him. So invincible was the habit of reliance upon him, so instinctive the certainty that all would go right in which he was concerned, that when he died, the confused anguish and amazement of loss was mingled in some minds with an obscure pang of surprise that almost resembled a reproach. "He never failed us before," it would have said, if it could ever have come so far as speech. Without words, he invited confidence. There was about him an air of safety and inviolable discretion. That he should betray a trust or reveal a secret, was an incongruous, an impossible idea. How did he reconcile his secrecy with that transparent veracity which made his mind like clear glass to those who talked with him? That is a question for the casuists who are disquieted about the practicability of truth. Something, no doubt, he owed to his native dignity of manner, which must have made it difficult to ask him an impertinent question; but more to courage and simplicity. What is certain is that he always knew a great many things which numbers of people were interested in knowing also; he never prevaricated, and he never told what he did not wish to tell.

To all who lived and labored with him, Mr. Capron was a power, a succor, and an inspiration. There were those to whom he was something more. No one can fully understand his relations with his teachers who does not know what he became to some of them, when out of long companionship and unbroken faith a cloudless friendship dawned, and in its sunshine the secret sweetness of his nature unfolded leaf by leaf. But that story must be left unwritten. "*We* knew him," says one, perhaps more near to him than any, "but we shall never make strangers understand why we honored him and loved him so." Even to tell what that little knot of friends was to him were hard—how they obeyed him, served him, set him above all men; to tell what he was to them would be impossible. The free heart, that gave, and never weighed its gift; the unforced magnanimity; the strength, at need less his than theirs; the constancy that was like a rock; the deep and dear lovingness. . . . . .

These are words; too vain and vague to express the power and meaning of his life. If from his upper sphere one born of a nobler race came down and clasped us, held us a little while in converse, and departed, could we more describe him than to say of his face that it was fair, and of his voice that it was lovely? Only the speech of the immortals can rightly syllable immortal beauty. That in our friend which was but common and earthly, we may reveal; his diviner part eludes our praise.

SCHOLARSHIP AND CHARACTER.

BY

THOMAS A. THACHER,

Professor in Yale College.

NEW HAVEN, April 22, 1874.

MY DEAR SIR:

As you requested, I send you in brief my impressions of the character and influence of Mr. Capron as a teacher.

I began to know him when he entered this college as a Freshman, in the year 1849, and the characteristics which were observable in him while he was a student here, remained with him ever after. He performed with a steady, quiet, intelligent faithfulness the tasks which were assigned him, never appearing to be anxious to attract attention, but evidently desirous of making his years of study truly profitable to himself. He did not confine himself as a scholar to the course prescribed by the institution, but took a broader and manlier view

of his proper work than is usual at that time of life. He did not drudge, but he did labor, honestly and earnestly, to make solid acquisitions, and, thus laboring, he made his college life a constant growth, a growth not only in knowledge, but, what is far better, in mental strength and refinement. During these four years, wisely and faithfully spent, the boy became a cultivated man.

When he went forth from the pupilage of a college to self-government, it was no great transition for him, for he had, all the time, been self-governed, and his character had been steadily maturing. College laws did not interfere with his feeling of independence, any more than did the laws of the State afterwards. The careful performance of duty in the circumstances in which he had voluntarily placed himself made him grow steadily stronger in character. This growth was attended with no noisy demonstration. It was as still as the growth (*occulto aevo*) of a tree; but, as in the growing tree, so in him every part was vital. If he was not enthusiastic or excitable to the world around him, there could be easily awakened within him a gentle covert enthusiasm, which those who knew him well, caught sight of and still remember. His soul was capable of great gladness. He was not morose, or censorious, or bitter. A tear might be ready to moisten his eye, but he had no venom for his tongue.

His gentleness, however, did not spring from weak-

ness, but from strength rather. He had no compromises in his soul. He could have gone to the stake, without outcry, for a principle himself; and if he could, without remonstrance, see others sacrifice principle rather than suffer, it was not because he did not realize the greatness of their mistake and their sin. He was capable of indignation; but sorrow or the thought of the Great Example could muffle his expression of it, unless it was made plain that he could do good by declaring himself. He was just and true. He was "steadfast and immovable," but without being obstinate, his air and manner never challenging opposition: on the contrary, one was more likely to be surprised to find the man who appeared so amiable, so well poised and strong in his intelligent convictions.

But I need not further enumerate his good qualities. They were growing qualities, which were developed with growing strength and beauty after he went forward from the position of a learner in college to that of a teacher in a school, and even to the end of his useful life. As we contemplate the twenty years which he spent as a teacher, what do we find to have been the secret of his success? That he had success no one doubts. When the sad news of his death spread over the city where he dwelt, how many there were, who responded, in their thoughts at least, that there was not another man among the 40,000 inhabitants there, who might not better have been spared! The lamentation

over him was not confined to those who were or had been his pupils, nor to any circle of friends or acquaintances, nor to any parish or denomination, nor to any political association. This quiet, undemonstrative teacher of a single school in a large city had, almost unconsciously, come to be treasured in the hearts of the whole community as a jewel of great worth, and when he was taken away, the sense of personal loss was almost universal. No magistrate, no clergyman, no professional man, no private citizen, whatever his virtues or good deeds, could have caused so deep and universal grief and regret by his death, as did Mr. Capron. Certainly then his life of twenty years was a success.

If now we ask, what was the cause of this success as a teacher, our answer must be, that it was in the man, in what he was, in his qualities and characteristics. It was the outworking of the man within into the sweet and consistent and busy activities of his life, that made him the great and growing blessing that he was to the community. The good man, out of the good treasure of his heart, brought forth good things. That substratum of a strong and, at the same time, a lovely character, was the essential thing. Without that, his outward life could not have been what it was, or, even if it could have been, it would have wanted that intangible life-giving power, which has a deeper spring than is visible to the eye. Let no man think that he can have Mr. Capron's success by imitating Mr. Capron's methods,

however minutely and constantly. He must begin deeper. He must study the qualities and harmonies of his character, and when he has caught his spirit, he may begin to hope for his success. It is, however, far easier to imitate actions than character,—far easier to do than to be.

But although the qualities of his character were the first requisites to his success, he would, of course, have accomplished far less if he had had inferior mental endowments. The possessor of two talents cannot, however earnest his purposes, accomplish as much as he could do with five talents. Mr. Capron had a good mind, and it was well constituted. He had good judgment. This appeared not only in the guidance of his own studies and the studies of others, but in the management of the affairs of the school, and of life in general. Whatever he had to do, he had the habit of doing judiciously. He was quick to discover what was worth while, and what was idle and useless, and thus escaped the waste and annoyance to himself and to others, which come from the hesitation of a feeble judgment. He was a thorough scholar, and he made his pupils feel that no other scholarship was worthy of the name, nor of any great value. They found that he expected of them good, honest work, the faithful use of their time, and, as his approbation was worth something, they were constantly influenced to do what he expected. But there was something more valuable cultivated in them than a desire to please him. There

was something in the whole man, in his sound mind, in his thorough scholarship, in his just treatment of them, in his guileless trueness, in his faithful devotedness to all their interests and to all the demands of duty, and, with all, in his quiet evenness of temper, which acted as a constantly transforming influence upon the great body of his pupils. Not all, of course, yielded to this influence. But it has certainly been a most precious thing for hundreds, perhaps thousands of youth to have been brought into the daily observation of such a life. The results of his labors as a teacher simply were tangible and striking. For years the pupils of his school took rank with the foremost as candidates for admission to the more advanced institutions. Of those who passed directly from the completed course of education in the High School to the various occupations of life, I am not able to speak so confidently; but I have no doubt that they derived equal advantages from Mr. Capron's services and administration.

One lesson from Mr. Capron's life as a teacher is so obvious that it hardly needs mention. But he presents one of the best illustrations I have ever met with, of the truth, that a successful teacher must be a man, as well as a scholar.

If it is the first rule of the orator, to bring into sympathy with himself those whom he has to deal with, much more should it be the rule of the teacher. It is not enough to show fullness of knowledge, quickness

to discover and correct mistakes, readiness to give the full quota of instruction, although these things are indispensable. Some sign of sympathy with success, some sign of sympathy with earnest and honest endeavor, even if the endeavor end in failure, some sign of the presence of a human soul, must betray itself in the eye, or the tone, or in some demeanor, if not in the words, of the teacher, or he will fail of the best success. There is great power in personal respect and esteem for a man of worth, to stimulate to activity the mind of a youthful student and keep it from the weariness which comes from long continued effort. There is no grade of scholarship which does not feel the touch of this power. The foremost are spurred by it to an intenser struggle: the hindmost, unless they are willingly the hindmost, gain confidence from it to put forth their best efforts against failure. And, what is better, it reaches beyond scholarship to the character, and thus tends to fashion and give strength to the entire being. Who that was ever under the instruction of Mr. Capron, does not still feel the influence of his personal character upon himself? He was eminent for his nice scholarship, but as a man he was more. In his combination of the rare scholar and the rare man he became a model teacher. He has been cut down in his prime in the midst of his fruitful labors, and we grieve over no ordinary loss.

More than two hundred years ago there was set up

in the ancient burying ground of Hartford, where it may still be read, a memorial of the colony's first 'teacher,' for so the associate of Thomas Hooker was then called. There is many a one who would hardly deem it extravagant, to repeat over Mr. Capron's new grave the closing line of that quaint old epitaph:

"Hartford! Thy richest jewel 's here interred."

OBITUARY NOTICES BY THE PRESS.

[From the Hartford Courant, Jan. 5th, 1874.]

THE DEATH OF MR. CAPRON.

Whatever may be the private bereavement in the death of Mr. Samuel M. Capron, the loss of the public is greater; and it is felt by the city of Hartford as a calamity. We desire to speak within bounds when we say that it seems as if the city could better spare almost any one else. We say this in our blindness, for we little know who is needed here or yonder, or by what means and instruments God's work is best carried on. But Mr. Capron's office is among the most difficult in the world to fill, and he filled it perfectly, it is hardly too much to say perfectly.

Mr. Capron, as the principal of our High and Grammar school, was the center of our educational affairs. Upon him now for some years has largely depended the educational impress which our youth have received. He had in his hands to a great degree the training of boys and girls in the higher education; he had the shaping of the interests which are of most vital consequence to our city and to its families. How profound

this influence was, those know who have had direct connection with the management of the school, or who have had children educated in it. Mr. Capron was in a position to influence more strongly the intellectual and moral condition of the city than almost any other man; and he was using that position most beneficently. There is no higher or more important office than that of Teacher, and Mr. Capron was born to that office; and not only was he born to it, but he had trained himself to its highest uses, and he was constantly growing in power and influence in it. It seems all the harder to lose him, because he was a growing man. And his work, to our eyes, was not done; he was just entering upon it, like a strong man, with a great field before him, equipped for great achievements.

The qualities that met in Mr. Capron to fit him for his important place were many. He was a fine and accurate scholar—a thorough scholar, never satisfied for himself or for others with half-acquisitions. And he had preëminently a natural gift of imparting his learning and of inspiring enthusiasm in study. This was one of his chief characteristics. The school under his charge has constantly grown in the quality of its general instruction; and boys who have gone from it to college have been distinguished in the solidity and brilliancy of their preparation above the candidates of most of the preparatory schools in the Union. The Hartford High and Grammar school has a most enviable distinction.

Mr. Capron was not only a scholar, but he was an organizer. The first impression of him was that he lacked that nervous energy needed at the head of a great establishment. But he had in a remarkable degree the power of administration, of bringing things to pass. And the most remarkable thing about it was that he did it in the quietest manner. There was no assumption about him, no parade, not a particle of ostentation. We have never seen another person who did his work so unobtrusively. He was exceedingly modest, but he had not the false timidity of inefficiency. If he has left us one example that we dwell on with more pleasure than another, it is that of quiet power. Here was a man who, without the least show or apparent ambition of applause or self-assertion, was doing day by day a great work. In our day of pretension the example is profoundly needed.

Mr. Capron was a well-balanced and a wise man ; his judgment on any point was worth obtaining. He was by habit, or by temperament perhaps, conservative, but he was very broad and liberal in entertaining new facts, new ideas, and all suggestions of an advance at any point. He was hospitable to new things, but he never lost his head and ran into extravagances. No man of our acquaintance scanned more closely the field of education, or took more intelligent note of all that is good in its most progressive thought and movement. We always found him familiar with the advance thought, and eager to take whatever is good in it. The time he

spent in Europe was devoted to study and observation that would accomplish him in his profession, and he returned from his residence there with broadened views, but in no respect moved from the stability of his fundamental convictions.

But with all his scholarship, gift as a teacher, and intellectual openness, Mr. Capron could not have been the man he was in his profession but for other qualities. He was profoundly a religious man, holding the simple Christian faith with childlike sincerity. He was a man of the utmost constitutional veracity. What a great thing that is to say of any man! He was all genuine, from his scholarship to his religion. He always inspired confidence, and if we ask the source of this in his school, in the church, in society, we find that it was *character*. It was the sum total of character that made this quiet, unobtrusive man the power he was; it was that which organized the school, inspired confidence in him, and gave him his hold upon community. So little did he ever put himself forward, that only those who knew him well were aware of his power or his influence.

It is not for us, here, to go further into his private life. It is enough to say that the warm attachment of his pupils for him and of all his associates was due quite as much to his kindness and sweetness, and nobility of nature, as to his position and his ability in it. He was a true man and a true friend. And he was as fit to go to heaven as he was to stay here.

[From the Hartford Evening Post, Jan. 5th, 1874.]

A PUBLIC SORROW—DEATH OF SAMUEL M. CAPRON, PRINCIPAL OF THE HIGH SCHOOL.

The notice in the latest edition of Saturday evening's Post of the unfavorable change in Mr. Capron's condition, in a measure prepared the public for the sad announcement of his death, which occurred Sunday morning at 20 minutes before nine o'clock. His disease was pneumonia, and with it he had been suffering severely only about a week, although he had not been well for a considerably longer period. About four weeks ago he complained of a severe cold and sore throat, but for some time continued to attend to his school duties, against the advice of his associates, who thought he ought to remain at home. Finally, during the last full week preceding the holiday vacation, he did so remain, but becoming somewhat better ventured out on Monday and Tuesday before Christmas to be present at the regular term examinations, and was also out on business on the next day, Wednesday. He passed a pleasant Christmas, feeling tolerably well, and was down town on business Friday morning (Dec. 26th), but returning home Friday afternoon was seized with violent chills, took to his bed, and never rose more. His sickness was from the first serious, and Mr. Capron seemed to have been in some sort impressed with the idea that

it was to be unto death, for on the Saturday after the attack he sent directions to Mr. Hall, vice-principal of the High school, concerning the disposition to be made of various open school and business matters, and also talked with his wife concerning family matters, in a way that showed an expectation of possible fatal termination of his illness. Through the week he was very ill, suffering considerably, and at times partially delirious, but on Friday evening he was apparently better, and on Friday evening his physicians thought that he would certainly recover, which belief the sick man also, for the first time, shared. But about 11 o'clock Friday night there came a sudden and unexpected change, and from that time Mr. Capron steadily failed, suffering much, meanwhile, until his death, which occurred as stated.

And now, having written thus much of our deceased friend's last sickness, where shall we find language to give a just estimate of his character, or to rightly express his inestimable worth? To his family belongs the precious memory of his rare virtues as a husband and father; to his church the remembrance of his fidelity as a co-laborer in the service of the Master; to the public his pure record as a citizen. In each of these relations he seemed as near perfection as human creatures can be, but it is not of these that we would mainly speak. It is as the leading instructor of our youth that he is best known, and every heart feels his loss as a public calamity; from every lip there comes the question

"Where shall we find his equal?" His success as a teacher was most remarkable, but was the natural consequence of his rare qualifications for such a position. Perhaps his greatest characteristic was his quiet power. In him were perfectly combined the firmness of a man and the gentleness of a woman. His voice was never raised above its even tone, and yet his spoken will was law. And this generally anomalous state of things was in large measure due to the profound confidence which every scholar had in Mr. Capron's justice. He was never swift to reprove, preferring rather first to hear what words of palliation might be offered. Once definitely determined, however, that a given disciplinary measure was needed, it was only through the presentation of facts that altered the aspects of the case that his decision could be changed. As a result of his careful consideration, those reproved acknowledged ever the justness of the censure. He was wholly frank and candid with associate teachers, pupils and parents. He was ever open to suggestions concerning general or individual welfare, and prompt to act upon such as were wholesome. His mental and moral balance was perfect; his equal-poised control was never disturbed. He was remarkably endowed with the faculty of imparting his learning to his pupils and of inspiring them with zeal for knowledge. As a teacher of the languages he was especially successful, so much so that our High school stands in the front rank of preparatory institutions, and its graduates have been among those

most honored in college life. Add to all this that he was a man of eminently refined tastes, an accomplished and thoroughly accurate scholar, a noble gentleman, and a consistent Christian, and what more can be said? His scholars loved him,—as well they might. Not one of all the hundreds who have been under his care in all these twenty years of his school life, ever heard him speak in slightest anger; not one ever, in thought even, accused him of favoritism; not one ever had a feeling of unjust treatment at his hands. The regard which he inspired in his pupils was as constant as his own mind. The scholars of a score of years ago clasp hands with those of to-day and find no language but tears to express their common grief. Unto them remain the precious legacy of his memory and the "loveliness of his perfect deeds."

And so he leaves us in the richness of his prime,—taken when apparently he had still a score more years of usefulness to live. It is all darkly strange, and we cannot understand it,—we only know that he is gone. It is needless to say that he went calmly and trustfully. The vague fears that hang about death distressed him not. His heart was wrung for his poor wife and children, but for himself there was no feeling of uneasiness. His faith grew stronger as the shadow fell upon him, and he passed with perfect peace into the Infinite.

"The great Intelligences fair
That range above our mortal state,
In circle round the blessed gate,
Received and gave him welcome there."

From the Hartford Times, Jan. 5th, 1874.

THE DEATH OF MR. CAPRON.

In the death of SAMUEL M. CAPRON, the Principal of the Hartford High School, that widely-known institution sustains a loss which cannot well be repaired. It is a loss not alone to the school which his quiet but judicious and unceasing labors had done so much to perfect and to elevate to its present eminent position, but to the cause of education itself. When we say that Mr. Capron was singularly well fitted, both by his natural disposition and his educational training, to conduct this large and important school—an establishment in which the scholars can be thoroughly qualified for a collegiate course—we but imperfectly express the truth. For in his case it is not saying too much to assert, unqualifiedly, that he was peculiarly and *perfectly* adapted to his responsible position. His uniformly quiet, modest, and gentle manner, completely removed as it was from even a distant approach to anything like a self-assumption, led hundreds who only knew him superficially to underestimate his real depth and strength of character. Only those who really knew him, those who were brought into near and frequent intercourse with him, and to whom was given the opportunity to learn by experience the union of marked and peculiar excellences which so singularly fitted him for his re-

sponsible work, can understand the real character and extent of the loss which the High School of Hartford has sustained. The silent and tearful class-meeting of the Senior Class, which to-day assembled to express its sense of this bereavement, and at which it was voted not to attempt to do so by passing the customary formal resolutions, was its own best tribute to the hold he had on the scholars, and the completeness of their trust and reliance upon him.

> "The silent organ loudest chants
> The master's requiem."

Mr. Capron first became connected with the High School by taking his brother's place as manager of the classical department, known as the Grammar School, soon after his graduation at Yale in 1853. On his return from a year's travel and study in Europe, a dozen years later, he became the Principal of the High School. In that responsible position he remained till the time of his death, giving to each scholar that watchful and undivided attention which can only spring from a truthful nature and a genuine enthusiasm for his work, and which in his case acted on the pupil as an inspiration. His position naturally led to a personal acquaintance between himself and many parents of the young ladies and gentlemen in the Senior Class especially; and to some it was known that Mr. Capron's interest in the educational progress and personal welfare of his schol-

ars was true and earnest, and almost as affectionate as it would have been in the case of his own children. The young people with whom he was more directly brought into daily contact, naturally feel a sense of bereavement beyond anything experienced in other cases of the loss of the head of a great school. They have resolved to testify their sorrow only in the expressive presence, in its accustomed place, of their teacher's chair, now draped, and empty,—and by joining the remaining teachers in a contribution of pure and fragrant flowers to the coffin which contains all that was earthly of the guide and friend they loved so well.

Mr. Capron's position was one of quiet and unobtrusive but decided and extensive influence. This was exerted directly upon the youth of both sexes under his immediate charge; and we rejoice to know that it was a *good* influence in all respects. He was a man of undemonstrative but marked character, and one whose exceptionally fine scholarship was united to a native and practically consistent religious taste and life. Not a person who wore his religion upon his coat-sleeve, for the public to see and admire, but who felt it in the quiet depths of his own heart and lived it out, modestly, but practically, in his daily life.

It would be wrong, perhaps, to say of *any* man that his place can never be filled. Our best men and women die, and the world's affairs go on, and the places of the dead are filled to more or less acceptance, and every-

thing seems, on the mere surface and face of affairs, to go on as well as formerly. Yet there are losses by death which can only be regarded as public calamities. To this community the death of Mr. Samuel M. Capron is felt to be such a loss. Probably he was more esteemed and depended upon, by a large part of the community, than he was himself aware of. He had the power to organize and direct; and when such a capacity is united—as it sometimes is, though not often—to a modest, true, and gentle spirit, and an inborn taste as well as a fine training and every natural and acquired accomplishment for the high position of a teacher, we have the perfected result in such a teacher, and such a man as we knew in Samuel M. Capron.

From the Springfield Republican, Jan. 24th, 1874.

THE MANLY TEACHER.

In the recent death of Mr. Capron, Principal of the Hartford High School, our neighbor city has been signally afflicted. His funeral was a memorable event in the annals of Hartford. Very seldom is it that a whole city is so thrilled with grief and made one house of mourning. The notices of the occasion by the Hartford press evince an unusual tenderness and carefulness of preparation, as if grateful for the privilege, not merely

of voicing the universal sentiment, but of adding their personal tribute of sincere and loving eulogy to the eloquence of flowers and requiem and tears and supplication. The pulpits of the city spoke in like manner for their several congregations, and the schools answered back with moistened eyes, and especially in the High School, when the last hope had fled, and Mr. Capron's chair stood vacated forever, both teachers and pupils gave way to an overpowering sorrow, and bowed heads and the sobs of tremulous hearts usurped the usual rites of devotion. It was fitting that Mayor Robinson should follow the family pastor in eloquent memorial words both for the city and out of the abundance of his own personal affection, and that the Episcopal burial service should entwine with the Congregational in the last rites for him who was the head and center of the city's educational interests and "its best-loved man." This remarkable place that Mr. Capron had in the affectionate esteem of the Hartford community is suggestive of healthful reflections.

It is a great encouragement to our quiet, faithful, and hard-working teachers. The outburst of grief in this case would have been a total surprise to Mr. Capron, could he have foreseen it on the eve of death, as it was also a surprise to those who knew and loved him best. They were not fully aware, till death revealed it, what a jewel of a man he was. It was like cutting and setting and sudden flashing of a rare diamond, which had

been already known to be of purest water, but whose extraordinary value had been but vaguely estimated.

It is a lesson to any community how priceless such a man is in his position as an educator. It leads us to enquire for the qualities that had won such genuine and universal respect.

They were first and least those which can be measured by professional standards, and to some degree by a salary price ; the fine and accurate scholarship, the sturdy common sense, the even temperament, the steady and persistent energy, the organizing and executive faculty, and the general culture. But above these professional requisites, first and last and all through there were belonging to Mr. Capron the rarest qualities of character—the symmetry and equipoise of a well-balanced manhood. There the deepest conscientiousness, the perfect truthfulness, the kindliness that always sweetened his sense of justice, the patient survey, the candor that made him "swift to hear, slow to speak and slow to wrath," the firmness of decision that left no soft spot for indefinite appeal, the frank, honest, accessible and sympathetic frame which put up no barriers of mere professional dignity or martinet authority, the quiet moral energy set aglow by a hidden and steady enthusiasm, the unconscious power of grappling at once and always with the impressible hearts and minds of youth, and so moulding, guiding, inspiring, strengthening—not by the rules and dies of discipline so much as by the

subtle influence of his own personality, working with his pupils both to will and to do, by a gentle but powerful and magnetic force, kindling up their own moral and intellectual aspirations, and educing their own free faculties, and so making them spontaneous and manly scholars.

It was just this subtle *personality* of Mr. Capron, summed up in a thoroughly genuine and manly character—the scholar, the gentleman, the Christian—adding to his treasures of learning and culture the priceless gift of a true and faithful heart, transmuting the teacher's duty into joy, and his responsibility into love, that won such general and affectionate esteem, and made him such a social power, and opened at last the fountains of grief which caused a whole city to lift up its voice and weep.

May his beautiful memory flourish and blossom in the perennial honor it confers on the ranks of a noble profession, in its quiet and unostentatious labors, more prized in reality than in appearance, and in the stimulus which such a grand example gives to the whole band of educators!

From a Sermon preached in the Asylum Hill Congregational Church, Hartford, Jan. 25th, 1874, by the Rev. J. H. Twichell.

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The more I think upon Mr. Capron, and the more I hear told about him, the more convinced I am, not only that his personal influence was in itself extraordinary, but that it was the most efficient of his powers. He had influence, indeed, from many sources ;—from his position,—from his intellectual strength and culture,—from his wisdom,—from his enthusiasm,—from his faculty of organization and administration,—from the science and thoroughness of his methods. Moreover, he was endowed with the attributes of a true manliness. It used to be said of one of the English monarchs, "King Henry knew *a man*." And in this quiet scholar, so gentle and modest and retiring, we had, nevertheless, *a man*. There were no elements of weakness in him. His character was positive. He had the courage of his own opinions. He carried the force and momentum of a manly will. He was firm as a rock in his decisions.

Yet I do not think that his power was primarily that of his manliness ; nor yet of the integrity and reasonableness and unimpeachable honor that adorned and perfected it. Not any or all of these things could account for the exquisite captivation into which he drew the hearts of those who were around him, and in which he held sway over them, and shaped their minds as by a

charm. It is one of the most beautiful things I ever knew of. It was an influence that had a silent growth; it could not be told how it grew: it established itself unawares. The first they knew, his pupils and associates found themselves conscious of a deep sense of obligation to him, and of wanting to acknowledge it. And thereafter their spirits were marvellously subject to him. One word of his approval was the sweetest of all praise; his very salutation became precious. "Why," said one of the boys, "if Mr. Capron shakes hands with me, or only bows to me and bids me 'good morning,' it makes me feel like being good all day." And that may stand for a specimen of the expressions without number that were and are to be heard on every side, all signifying the same thing. On the slightest touch of contact a virtue seems to have gone out of him to set the best impulses astir and to inspire the thought and purpose of well doing.

It was by coöperation with this noblest of his powers of influence that his other strength wrought to its best advantage. And what did it come from? It was not a fascination by speech, or by any sort of formal expression. It was not a personal magnetism,—the overflow and radiation of physical vitality. Nor was it the fruit of his amiabilities—of his sympathy and kindness, though they bore their part in it. No; the response it evoked was, it seems to me, something deeper than admiration, or respect, or even affection, though it

included them all. The profound source of the power he exercised lay back of everything I have named. It was his radical *unselfishness*. *That*, I am persuaded, was the secret of the sweet and strong ascendency he gained and kept over so many hearts. Samuel M. Capron was a man who did not live unto himself. And it was that fact more than anything else, that made the results of personal relation to him just what they were. His influence, wherein it produced the peculiar effect it was observed to produce, was essentially a *spiritual* influence. And being such, it did not require the medium of personal gifts in the ordinary sense, to render it operative. It wrought by the communication of those subtle spiritual laws that are able to dispense with much expression by words or other language. There is nothing in this world that is so sure to have the power that belongs to it as the principle of vicariousness in the human breast, wherever it exists, and upon that principle the character of our dear friend was founded. The Cross of Christ was lifted up in him, and whenever the Cross of Christ is lifted up, it draws souls to it: it is the most resistless of all forces, though the gentlest of all.

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It is a man's life—a man's character that tells. I am glad, I am ready to give thanks that Mr. Capron was not a man of words or much manifest expression, for thereby the power that dwelt in his spirit,—in *him-*

self, is the more emphasized and revealed. And it was expressed in work—work which he chose and loved and gloried in, and to which he gave himself up with ever new zest and joy, year after year, to do it the best he could, unto the end. His whole soul was in his calling. "That dear old High school," he murmured more than once during his sickness, "I have carried it on my heart."

In the Second Congregational Church, Hartford, on the day of Mr. Capron's death, the Rev. E. P. Parker, in concluding a Sermon suggested by the autobiography of John Stuart Mill, said:

* * * * *

"A very precious, sweet, and useful life has come to its earthly bound here in Hartford to-day; the well-known, the universally respected and beloved principal of the High school in this city fell asleep this morning. How humble, how modest, how simple and sincere, how true and faithful he was! No better man lived among us. The last man to be deceived, he looked a thing through. He put his feet down carefully on the Rock and stood there. He knew in whom he believed. What say you to Mr. Capron? Being dead he yet speaketh."

On the same day, in the Pearl Street Congregational Church, Hartford, the Rev. W. L. Gage in a Sermon on "Perfected Christian Manhood," from the text, "And the city lieth four-square; the length and the breadth and the height thereof are equal," said:

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"Since entering these courts to-day, many of us have received the tidings that one who was an admirable illustration of our theme has passed into the conditions of still more glorified manhood than he had on earth. And those who have not heard of his death will hardly need to be told that I refer to the beloved and honored Samuel M. Capron. Rarely do we meet a man more rounded and balanced than he: so that although he may have been excelled in particulars, he has rarely been surpassed in the wholeness of his character. I cannot now portray that which we now so sadly miss among us. It was my good fortune to know him well, to labor by his side in the educational interests of the city; and I can testify that almost more than any one whom I have known, he resembled that city which lieth four-square, and whose height and length and breadth are equal; and it is with a sad and melancholy pleasure, that I now drop this little handful of flowers on his untimely grave."

In other churches brief mention of the death of Mr. Capron was also made, the announcement being received with profound sorrow, which often found expression in tears.

From a Sermon preached by Rev. C. H. B. Tremaine in St. Thomas' (Episcopal) Church, Hartford, Jan. 11th, 1874.

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"A great sorrow rests upon our city. One has been taken from us who was most dearly beloved by all, and whose death is universally deplored. His loss is a public calamity. In our deep grief it seems to us as if his place could never be filled. Faults he may have had as he was but human; but from a long and intimate acquaintance with him I could not, if I desired, mention one. Indeed to the young with whom he was associated, and who always loved him with a sincere and abiding affection, he seemed a perfect man. There were united in him the rarest intellectual gifts, the most remarkable fitness for his chosen profession, and the noblest virtues as a man. Nor was this all; his whole life was crowned and glorified by his earnest unpretending piety, by his childlike faith in Jesus Christ. As the wise men of old—whose visit to the Infant Saviour we commemorate at this season—brought their rich gifts and humbly offered them to Christ, so in no less degree did our beloved friend and teacher give himself, body, soul, and spirit, to the service of the same Lord.

It is not my purpose to add any words of eulogy to what has been said by those better fitted for this duty than myself—nor are such words necessary. My desire is rather to offer a humble tribute of affection and

gratitude to his precious memory. And yet much as has been said, prompted by loving hearts, concerning his many virtues, still the whole truth has not been told, nor can it ever be. No language can begin to express the wondrous beauty and surpassing worth of the earthly life of him who has just gone to the rest of Paradise. Some lasting memorial of him will no doubt be placed in the scene of his labors—the spot so dear to him—but yet there is a far more enduring record written in letters of undying love deep in the hearts of thousands.

The evil which men do lives after them; but God be praised that the power of good deeds also cannot perish. And the blessed influence of such a pure and holy life as was that of our beloved brother can never be estimated—neither will it ever die. Let us then thank God for the good example of all those of his servants, who having finished their course in faith do now rest from their labors, and pray that we with them may have our perfect consummation and bliss both in body and soul in the mansions of eternal glory—through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Trinity Church—Tribute to Mr. Capron.

In Trinity church yesterday morning, after the sermon, the rector, the Rev. Professor Johnson, made a brief address commemorative of the life and character of the late Mr. Capron, thanking God for the example of such a pure and perfect Christian life. He then,

in behalf of the afflicted city and community, requested the congregation to unite with him in special prayer for persons under affliction, and thanksgiving for the memory of those who, having finished this life in the faith and fear of Christ, do rest from their labors.

From an Editorial in the Hartford Courant, Feb. 3d, 1874.

The age of no-faith in anything but money and cheek is nearly ended. A belief in goodness and truth, and honesty and purity, is surely coming again as a living faith in the hearts of men. There may be less regard for creeds, but there will be a more intelligent faith in the central idea of all creed, a faith in a personal God—

> That God, which ever lives and loves,
> One God, one law, one element,
> And one far-off divine event,
> To which the whole creation moves.

The young men will no longer look upon the acquisition of wealth, and the ability of fast-living as the great object to be attained in life. They will learn that a good name is better than riches, the consciousness of rectitude and virtue better than the transitory pleasures of unholy living; that a successful and happy life is not measured by dollars and cents; that to live such a life as the late Principal of our High School, and to leave such a name as his, is far better than to have secured untold wealth and fame at the cost of integrity and self respect.

THE FUNERAL.

From the Hartford Courant, Jan. 8th, 1874.

SERVICES AT ASYLUM HILL CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

Before ten o'clock, the hour appointed for paying the last tribute of public honor and respect to the late SAMUEL M. CAPRON, the Asylum Hill Congregational church was filled. In spite of the tempest of rain that was prevailing, people came from every part of the city —all denominations, all ranks in life were represented. The seats in the church were filled, and the aisles were filled. And in all faces was the same expression of profound grief; telling its own story of how the man was loved.

The Christmas greens still hung in the church, and to these was added about the desk the drapery of mourning and the tribute of flowers. All the decorations were simple, but the white flowers were abundant, and there were emblematic wreaths, crosses and crowns woven of white and green. Over against the seat that had been occupied by the deceased hung a shield with the motto—"Mark the perfect man."

After a short prayer at the house the remains were brought to the church, accompanied by the clergy, the mourners and friends, and as the sad procession passed up the aisle, the audience stood in tearful silence. The pall bearers were Joseph Hall, vice-principal of the High school, and Augustus Morse, principal of the North Middle school; Elisha Johnson and Alfred E. Burr, of the High school committee; H. J. Johnson and F. L. Gleason, senior deacons of the Asylum Hill church; and Drs. Stearns and Hudson, college classmates of the deceased.

The Rev. Dr. Burton began the services by a brief invocation. The Rev. C. R. Fisher read the scriptures used in the Episcopal funeral service. Dr. Burton then read and the Christ church quartette (with Mr. Wilson at the organ) sang with great feeling three verses of the hymn:

Asleep in Jesus! blessed sleep.

The Rev. Mr. Twichell offered prayer, at the conclusion of which he delivered the following address:

THE REV. MR. TWICHELL'S ADDRESS.

When Mr. Capron knew that he was dying, being of an undisturbed mind, and tranquilly contemplating all that pertained to his departure from this life, he spoke concerning his funeral. He said, as you might know he would, "Let it be as quiet an affair as may be, for I

have been a quiet man, and have not made much stir in the world."

And they to whom the ordering of it is committed are making it as quiet an affair as they feel at liberty to—as, in fact, it seems possible to. In bringing his remains from the home where he dwelt with his family, to have the last words said over them in this place where he worshiped his God and Saviour, since it is done for the sake of those whom he loved and who loved him, there is no transgression of the spirit of privacy. For it is written in all your faces, that though this occasion is, in a manner, public, it is none the less truly to the heart of every one of you a private occasion.

Mr. Capron thought that he had made little stir in this world—and by that he meant, I suppose, in this community. Yet I never saw this community so stirred as it has been these last few days because of him. In the years I have lived here, I have never seen the city of Hartford in such trouble as it is now. A stranger passing through our streets would know that we are in trouble. From the first day that he was reported to be dangerously sick there were everywhere manifest tokens of an unusual distress, and when finally the word went round that he was no more, it is not too much to say that the people lifted up their voice and wept. Nor is it this city alone that feels the stroke. From far and near there come to us signs witnessing

that many citizens of many other places partake of the affliction. It is a remarkable—I had almost said a strange phenomenon—the effect of this event.

It were quite superfluous in me to attempt to depict the feeling produced by it, for it is one which we share in common. I will say of it only this, that while the sense of personal bereavement and of a public loss is so great that we seem to have received a check in our general prosperity, are the chief elements of it, there is also mingled with it something of a sense of surprise. Much as we loved and honored Mr. Capron—high as the mark of value which we set upon him was, we could hardly have imagined that his death would take such a hold upon us and create such a profound sensation as it does. To him, certainly, could he have foreseen it, it would have been a surprise, and it is, in some measure, a surprise to us. Many of us, at any rate, and I presume most of us, are confessing that we had not been aware till now of how much we thought of him, or of what was thought of him. By his sickness, when it was feared to be mortal, it was revealed to me at least, very impressively, both in what I felt myself and in the feeling I saw expressed in others—in the look and tone with which they inquired about him and spoke of him—that I had not begun either to know my own heart toward him, or to appreciate the significance of his life, or to realize the quality of the regard in which he was held. And as his friend and pastor I had antici-

pated a peculiar satisfaction when, if it pleased God to recover him of his sickness, he should be convalescent, in telling how it was, though I doubted if I could make him believe it.

But he has gone from us never dreaming that he could be so accounted of as he is to-day, and we are left to ask what was it in him that prepared us, in such a degree unconsciously, to be so moved as we are, at being called to bid him the long farewell. Wherein lay his power? For what we recognize as evidenced by all these signs that now appear, is that he was a man of power. And it is, I think, in having this fact discovered to us, as it never was or could have been before, that we experience the surprise I have spoken of. For he did not seem like a man of power. You know what I mean. His appearance and manner, as he moved among us, and went about his work, were not such, as in our superficial ways of thinking, we are accustomed to associate with the idea of power. Neither did he visibly possess the gifts of expression and communication that some men have. I do not at all mean to imply that his power was hid, for it was not. Proofs of it there were, abundant and constant, and all the more notable because it was so little advertised in himself. I well remember observing the operation of it before I knew him, both in the life and ambition with which the minds of his pupils were inspired, and in the extraordinary enthusiasm with which they all, and those

who had been his pupils, and those who were associated with him as teachers, believed in him, and I wondered how that still and undemonstrative man could so rouse them and take their hearts. He had power very great in degree and very noble in kind. That is plain enough. Such mourning as ours is to-day, were not possible save when a *strong* as well as a good man is fallen. Yet we have to look under the surface to find the secret of the strength that clothed this life now ended. And we shall not look in vain. Mr. Capron, for all that he moved in such quietness among us and made so little noise, was really a man of a most profound and intense enthusiasm. And this enthusiasm burned all the more steadily in his bosom, and was all the more sustained as a motive with him, for the very reason that it was not in his nature to give it much outward expression. Yet it had expression, as everything that is in a man must have. It was *ex*pressed for it was *im*pressed. What matter how, it was communicated and reproduced. Of course it was, for nothing but enthusiasm can make enthusiasm.

And added to his enthusiasm was a rare wisdom to guide it, and which did guide it to its secure results. And next I should name that golden integrity, that perfect truthfulness, that justice which was universally felt to be so omnipresent and inseparable a quality of his mind and character, that it was expected of him pretty much as the sun is expected to shine. But these

last were among the more apparent and readily recognized sources of his power. Not quite so obvious was his possession of a robust, inflexible will, which, however, nearness to him soon revealed. Still less manifest to a casual observation was another trait of power that crowned all the rest and set them free to have their full effect—and that was his deep and tender affectionateness. He was one of the most sympathetic and loving of men. Underneath the mask of his constitutional reserve there was as quick and warm and responsive a heart as ever beat, and O, what a pure and faithful heart it was! And herein, too, notwithstanding he did not much express himself in the ordinary form, he still was expressed. For the love and loyalty he won, and that we saw him wearing as one fair trophy of success, and that are translated in the eloquence of flowers and tears to-day, show it. You, especially, who were his pupils, were exceedingly dear to him, and that was why he was and is and will be so exceedingly dear to you. And I will only say more, for I must be very brief and leave almost everything unsaid for the present, that the love with which he loved you, as you all know, was a love he bore you for Christ's sake. You cannot doubt that. The best and truest part of his power as a man, was that which belonged to him as a Christian man. It came from a Power that was upon him. The last book that Mr. Capron read was the autobiography of John Stuart Mill, the man without a God. And the

last time he went abroad from his house he gave to a friend whom he chanced to meet an account of what he had been reading. And as they parted at the corner of Asylum and Main streets, Mr. Capron said as his final comment upon it, "What a glorious thing this hope of ours in Christ is." You were not surprised to hear that hope remained with him to his last hour and proved itself to be a glorious hope—that by reason of it the shadows of death were turned into brightness about him. It was even so. Our friend laid him down in the sleep that knows no waking in perfect peace, resting, like a little child, in the arms of the Saviour whom he trusted. And now, ye young men and women, to whom so many times in life he gave instruction, let him in death teach you one more lesson—even that which he desired you to learn before all other knowledge. Hear these dumb lips once more repeat—hear it, too, ye men and brethren, and let the echo of it linger in your souls, "How glorious a thing the hope in Christ is."

After another hymn by the choir,

Jesus, Lover of my Soul,

Mayor Robinson, at the request of the family, and as a representative of the city, spoke as follows:—

In compliance with the wishes of those who were and are dearest to our beloved one, I have, with some hesitation, consented to add a few words to those so well said by our reverend friend, in memory of our dead.

This vast assembly of budding childhood and silvered old age, representing all types of activity and station in our community, this sable drapery of woe, these sweet flowers, in wreath, and star, and cross, and crown, these trembling lips, these eyes veiled in tears, tell more impressively than can speech, that our city mourns with unaffected grief. It is possible when a public man dies to create a demonstration of mourning which shadows no substance of sorrow. But the bitterness of soul which bubbles up to-day is as sincere and natural as the mountain spring. Indeed, as we met upon the streets at the first story of his death, even the common salutation was universally changed to the tone of affliction, and the city seemed like the city of the Egyptians, where "there was not a house in which there was not one dead." Our city mourns in the house of its pride and the house of its love.

The loss of a leader in any of the influential professions and employments, is always a bereavement and often an alarm. These great vacancies stagger faith and paralyze hope. But there is something peculiarly tender and touching in the death, at the threshold of maturity, of a leader in that profession, which with a kind of catholic fatherhood, moulds and guides the sensitive mind and heart of young students, and so fashions, we know not how comprehensively, the moral and intellectual life of society.

I have spoken of him whom we mourn as a leader in his honorable profession. To my own apprehension he realized the noblest ideal of his profession. Had he chosen to be a clergyman, a lawyer, a statesman, or an editor, his success would have been assured, but it is hardly probable that in either of these callings he would have accomplished so much for the good of mankind as he has as a teacher. To natural qualifications of the highest and rarest order he added such mental discipline and culture, such treasures of scholarship and learning as perfected him in his work. A classical scholar of the highest type, an accomplished student in mathematics and the physical sciences, he still delighted in the exhaustless wealth of our own English language and its literature.

Let me briefly, for the few minutes allotted to me will allow no more, indicate one or two of the striking qualities of our friend in his profession. His professional character was based upon a broad, solid foundation of common sense. No wild thought of the hour, no vagary of a theorist, no vision of a dreamer found a resting place with him. Conservative, he suggested many and welcomed all improvements, but nothing upon the breath of a mere impulse, or the fancy of a moment. Enterprising, he honored in system and practice that which had been proved and found worthy. In the searching judicature of his sound sense the hollowness of sham was detected and the weight of

solid merit was appreciated and added to his treasury. Keeping quite abreast of the most advanced aggressions of science, and assured in the peace of his deepest consciousness of the complete harmony of all truth, he still held fast to those central facts which the experience of the ages has made sure, and to that divine Christianity which has carried the world on to its noblest and purest civilization.

To his strong good sense he added a right estimate and use of discipline. Believing in law as the only true liberty of action, he sought to make rules for his pupils and not to make pupils for his rules. Like all wise rulers, he followed the Infinite sovereign, who wrote with His finger upon the stony tablets commandments for His creatures, not as arbitrary enactments, but as rules for His creatures' good. And so the Great Teacher, when criticised by worshipers of legal technicality, reproved their flippancy by reminding them that law was made for man, and not man for law. The discipline of the High School will be remembered by his pupils as an easy yoke, like the family regulations of a loving father.

Again, Mr. Capron was conscientious in his work. He fulfilled his undertaking. Not forgetting the contract obligations of his employment, he was faithful to those higher obligations of duty which reach deeper than salaries and call for responses to confidence. But he did not stop with the discharge of his duty. He

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was an enthusiast in his profession. And just here is often the distinction between excellence and eminence. Conscientiousness is first and greatest—without it there can be no completeness. And in this to-day, we cannot magnify it too much. But a fulfilment of duty and no more is after all only prose. Enthusiasm adds the charm of poetry. To the accuracy, and honesty, and completeness of the faithful servant and contractor, he added the charms and intensities of the enthusiast.

Let me add but one more of his professional traits. I mean the preservation of his individual character and his power of impressing it upon his pupils. Our beloved friend was in school always the teacher, but he was always himself. And here is the power of the teacher—this wondrous subtle force which reproduces him in his pupils. And here is the teacher's good glory; and here, when he rests from his labors, his works follow him. The author, by his words, influences readers and new readers; the orator, by the electricity of his eloquence, stirs the hearts of thousands, but how often his power dies, like the lightning in the air when the flash is over; the painter by his canvas, the sculptor by his marble, the architect by his towers, arches, and domes, penetrates the thoughts of men,—but the perfect teacher impresses himself upon the hearts and characters of his pupils more tenderly and in more unfading tone than the sunbeams can stamp his features upon the photographer's plate. And so upon the throb-

bing hearts of these his pupils of to-day and of yesterday our friend has stamped himself into the fibres of their being. I dare to say that of the 3,000 or 5,000 pupils who have come under his influence in these twenty years, not one has ever parted from him except in unbounded respect and sincere love. Such a record is seldom made for the teacher. It is to these and other qualities of our friend to which I cannot allude that we owe in great part the eminence universally conceded to our High School, an institution unsurpassed by any high school in the land.

And now a word of my friend as a man. It is almost twenty-five years since we met at the beginning of college life:—college life! unreal as a romance, yet real as the great outer world in miniature. I was prepossessed with attachment to him for his brother's sake, who had been my loved teacher in this same High School. Thank God that this dear brother was at home from his labor of love beyond the seas, and was permitted to be with him whom we mourn to-day, as he went down through the dark river in the peace of holy faith. Through the dark river! and on—and up—to the purer and better life.

From that first day of college life to the close of its four years of sunlight, and through the twenty years of our life together in this beautiful city, which he learned deeply to love, I have known him thoroughly and loved him even more. I believe there never fell

from those lips, which shall throb no more with the tide of life, one unkind word to any of his fellow men, nor one utterance of detraction, for that noble, generous heart had no home for malice or bitterness.

Of his sincerity, truthfulness, tenderness, faithfulness, sympathy, and singular sense of justice, I will not now speak, nor will I enter into any analysis of his intellect. I will particularize but one trait in his character—that trait is courage. Little did those who imperfectly knew him, who saw him pass along with unassuming manner, who felt in his presence at first a consciousness in him of reserve, know that he who was as gentle as a woman was as truly brave as a hero.

When our Lord spoke to the multitude upon the mountain, He covered with the halo of His beatitude, the poor in spirit, the meek, the peace-makers, the pure in heart. That halo of beatitude rests upon our dead. The apostle St. Peter built into one beautiful arch the real graces of goodness and greatness—faith, the corner stone, manliness, knowledge, self-control, patience, piety, brotherly-kindness, and love, the key-stone. Our beloved friend incarnated them all, and all in a harmony as beautiful as the blending of the prismatic hues into light. If he was the perfect teacher, few have come nearer the stature of the perfect man. His course was as steady and true and symmetrical as the orbit of a planet. And who shall measure the influence of one such life? Who shall "bind the sweet influences of

the Pleiades"? One such man demonstrates the divine within us; demonstrates the sweet power of the Rose of Sharon and the Lily of the Valley; demonstrates the sacredness of our holy religion, which was his inspiration and his life. What an outfit for the eternal life must such a character be!

Forty-one years! The table lands of life just reached and the sun just at noon. Before him what usefulness! what joy in his victory! And the sun has gone down. And our hopes withered as lilies in the frost, our hearts bleeding like bruised vines. And there are desolations of which I may not, dare not speak. Forty-one years; how full! how busy! how blessed! The tick of the watch and the course of the sun are but man's ways of measuring life. There are no measures of years, there is no time with God. Who shall say what life is the fullest and longest?

The Romans thought that studying monumental inscriptions weakened the memory. It was a maxim of heathen. Let us study the memorials of our brother and teacher and friend.

> "Sleep well, my brother! sleep, precious dust!
> Call, he shall answer Thee, God of the Just!"

The choir again sang, the benediction was pronounced, and opportunity was given the vast concourse to look

once more on the features of the man whose loss is so deeply deplored. All the services were simple, tender, sincere, and very impressive.

The remains were taken to Uxbridge, Mass., the home of the deceased's father, for interment.

[Courant, Feb. 17.]

IN MEMORIAM

S. M. C.

OB. JAN. 4, 1874:

Lord, to what end thy Sabbaths, if no rest
Visit our hearts? Peace is thy name; but we,
We wage unequal warfare all our days,
And strike with unarmed hands a weaponed Fate.
Thinking on him for whom our hearts are sore,
I paced the churchward path; and for his sake,
Rough seemed the way, colder the cruel wind,
And all the day a darkness to my eyes.
God was not in the church; an idle word
Passed by a listless ear: I sat and heard,
And did not hear, lost in a bitter dream.
But when the hymn soared up, and seemed to make
Something like music in a jarring world,
Once and again my wandering painful thoughts
Clung round the measure, as in eddies cling
Leaves, round some branch whereon they did not grow.
So broken fragments of half-conscious rhyme
Mixed in my untuned soul with tuneless prayer.

* * * * * * *

Only a moment ago you were with us,
All our heart's loyalty laid at your feet;
Suddenly, now, you are heir to such riches,
You drop our poor gifts for a treasure more sweet.

So you were with us, as in a dim courtyard,
Where babes play all day with bare feet on the stone,
Some alien child is their comrade and ruler,
Lights up their dull sports with a fire of his own.

He knows a strange tale of the house he was born in ;
Half charmed and half scornful, they listen around :
One day the lost father comes sudden and splendid ;—
He flings the worn toys that he held to the ground.

Can they be sure, in the dazzle and wonder,
Just what they saw, turning back with a sigh ?
Something flashed out—do you think it was sunshine ?
And what was it waved, as the carriage went by ?

Still in their hearts and their mouths the tradition
Vaguely lives on, with its promise and pain ;
Eyes that have looked on that fair broken vision
Never can rest in their darkness again.

So we—but we faint while we yearn and endeavor,
Wondering, When is the dream coming true ?
Oh, our lost leader ! you spoke and we hastened ;
How can we follow a meaner than you ?

* * * * * * *

O God—if thou be God that hadst the heart
To make us and to leave us here so far,
So far away and dark ! Thy work am I,
Therefore I must be heard when I accuse :
Answer me, Lord, who once must answer thee.
Faithless are we and base ; out of Earth's clay
Fashioned at first, and still to Earth returning.
So her dull dust stops up forevermore
Our ears from hearing, and beclouds our eyes,
That else might see thee ; but this man, thou knowest,
Held by thy hand, and felt thee in the dark.

So, when we touched him, keener pulses ran
Through our thick blood, and vaguely we looked round,
Half conscious of a God. And must we think
Somewhere there is another world, so poor,
It needs must have our riches? so forlorn,
Forgotten in a corner of thy realm,
Thou hast more need of proving, there than here?
Nay, Lord, and could not all the heavenly host
Suffice to do thy pleasure? To that space
Of fearful light that lies around thy feet,
Myriads of angels gather from afar,
And cannot rest for love, their cloudless eyes
Rapt on thy face, if by celestial chance
Some errand fall their way: and wouldst thou take
Our master from our head, the time unripe,
Unwrought the work, the grasses all unsown
That should have dressed his grave?

* * * * * * *

Wild my words; do you reprove them
With the eyes you used to wear,
Calmer, now, the brow above them,
By so much as heaven is fair?

Ah, and has your heaven consoled you
For our helpless tears that start?
All its starry secrets told you,
For one woman's widowed heart?

Was there one, you smiled in learning,
One dear secret of belief,
In an ecstasy discerning
All the blindness of our grief?

Oh, but us the night abuses;
And our sorrow aches and burns:

Better gifts our heart refuses ;
Give the *one* for which it yearns !

* * * * * * *

So swayed my soul, rocked on a bitter flood
Of sombre questioning ; and none replied,
Nor any voice made answer ; but the wind,
Without the casement tossing the great pine,
Threw up unfaithful shadows on the wall ;
And through the dazzle of my tears I saw,
High up, the phantom of a shaken Cross.

M. A. B.

AT THE HIGH SCHOOL.

From the Evening Post of Jan. 5th.

Although the announcement was made in the morning paper that the school would not be opened until after the funeral, there was still a considerable gathering of scholars there this morning. Some few who came were shocked with sudden surprise at the announcement of his death, but nearly all were previously aware of the sad event, and spoke in hushed tones and with manifest grief at their loss. The senior class which was under Mr. Capron's more immediate care, gathered in their class-room and took formal and appropriate action concerning his death, and their attendance upon the funeral services, arranging also for floral tributes to be placed upon his coffin.

From the Evening Post of January 6th.

MEETING OF HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES.

A notice appeared in the morning paper calling a meeting of the graduates of the High School at the

High School building to-day, to take action concerning the death of Mr. Capron, and although the notice was limited and the weather very unpleasant, there was nevertheless a large gathering of ladies and gentlemen at the specified time and place. Arthur N. Hollister was appointed chairman of the gathering, and Charles H. Clark secretary. Remarks expressive of the deep sorrow of the graduates at the loss of their beloved instructor and friend were made by Mr. Hollister, Rev. C. H. B. Tremaine, James A. Smith, Jr., C. H. Owen, A. Harbison, J. L. Barbour, and others, and trembling tones and tearful eyes testified to the profound emotion of those present. There seemed to be a general idea that formal resolutions expressive of the sorrow felt would be both inadequate and superfluous, but a committee consisting of Messrs. Owen, Barbour, and Smith was appointed to suggest some suitable form of commemorative action. This committee, after deliberation, reported the following, looking to the carrying out of an expressed wish of the deceased:

WHEREAS, No more fitting tribute can be paid to the memory of Samuel M. Capron than to perpetuate the influences of his teaching and to carry into effect the plans his death has left unfinished; therefore,

Resolved, That a committee consisting of Charles H. Owen, A. N. Hollister, Seymour Tryon, Miss Jennie A. Bidwell, and Miss Kate Burbank be appointed to report to some future meeting plans for the organization of an association of graduates of the High and Grammar schools, in accordance with the expressed wishes of Mr. Capron and as a memorial of him.

The resolution was adopted unanimously, and the secretary was requested to communicate to the family of Mr. Capron a record of the action taken by his former scholars with an expression of their heartfelt sympathy. The Rev. Mr. Tremaine suggested the propriety of presenting to the school some tangible memorial of the deceased, possibly in the shape of a library, and it was understood that the committee appointed, as above stated, should take the suggestion into consideration. At the close of the meeting, the roll was called and members of the following graduating classes responded, all but four out of the entire twenty since Mr. Capron became connected with the school being represented: '54, '55, '56, '58, '61, '63, '64, '65, '66, '67, '68, '69, '70, '71, '72, '73.

From the Evening Post of January 8th.

AT HIGH SCHOOL.

The teachers and scholars of the High School met this morning in the school building for the first time since Mr. Capron's death. It was a very sad meeting. The scholars, as usual, assembled at nine o'clock in the class-rooms, proceeding thence immediately to the school-hall, where the morning devotional exercises are held. Here it was that the bereavement which the members of the school, collectively and individually,

had sustained, seemed to force itself upon them in all its dreadful sadness. The pleasant voice that had been wont to direct the morning's devotions, was not heard; the kindly face that teachers and scholars had looked upon, was absent; the hand that had daily touched the bell to secure silence or in token of dismissal, had vanished. The Principal's vacant chair and the desk by which he had stood were draped in mourning, and behind desk and chair, upon the wall, were folds of funeral drapery parting over a pure white tablet upon which appeared in evergreen letters, the simple legend:

S. M. C.
1832–1874.

When the scholars were all seated, Mr. Hall, the acting Principal, read a portion of the fifth chapter of the Gospel according to St. Matthew, comprising the beatitudes as set forth in the Sermon on the Mount. Then the following beautiful hymn, one of Mr. Capron's favorites, was sung to the sweet strains of "Dawn."

One sweetly solemn thought
  Comes to me o'er and o'er—
Nearer my parting hour am I
  Than e'er I was before.

Nearer my Father's house,
  Where many mansions be;
Nearer the throne where Jesus reigns,
  Nearer the crystal sea;

Nearer my going home,
  Laying my burden down,
Leaving my cross of heavy grief,
  Wearing my starry crown.

Jesus ! to thee I cling :
  Strengthen my arm of faith ;
Stay near me while my way-worn feet
  Press through the stream of death.

Following the singing of the hymn, in which many, owing to their emotion, were unable to join, Mr. Hall offered prayer, embodying fit words of supplication for comfort in the overshadowing affliction, and at the conclusion of the prayer tried to say a few words touching the sad event that filled all hearts. He alluded to the great loss sustained, and to the fact that as yet it could not be fully realized ; counseled the scholars to learn of Mr. Capron's life and teachings, and was going on to say more, but his great grief overcame him, and he was obliged to abandon the attempt at speech, signifying to Mr. Merriam to take up the theme, which the latter did at length, touching upon the inestimable virtues of the deceased, his gentleness, patience, and fatherly kindness, and urging the scholars to strive to live in accordance with the principles which Mr. Capron professed, and to take to heart the lessons of the sad bereavement. Following Mr. Merriam's remarks the bell of dismissal was sounded, and the sorrowful scholars repaired to their respective class-rooms. Throughout the entire exercises the school was in tears, and the scene was one of most painful and oppressive sadness.

GRADUATION ADDRESS,

WITH VALEDICTORY

DELIVERED AT THE

HARTFORD PUBLIC HIGH SCHOOL,

April 24th, 1874.

BY ABBY M. WILLIAMS.

The Holy Grail.

On a bright spring morning of the olden time a small band of sturdy knights, mounted and equipped for a long journey, might have been seen slowly passing the drawbridge of the stately castle of Camelot.

The portcullis dropped with a surly clang and the knights rode forth in silence, pausing not until they reached a slight eminence overlooking the castle, when, as if by common consent, they drew rein and turned to cast one final, lingering look upon the proudest hall in all that goodly land.

Before them stretches an enchanting landscape, clad in spring's brightest garb. There lies the jousting-field where their earliest enthusiasm was kindled, and where they won their earliest triumphs; they hear for the last time the convent bells ringing out their matin

chimes, and the familiar sound brings memories of one whom they had laid to rest one bright September day. When his knightly career was scarcely begun, when his hopes and theirs were highest he had been summoned home. The gilded turrets of Merlin's Hall, glistening in the sunlight, recall many a revel and delightful tale of knightly deeds; they recall the solemn vows made the last time they had gathered about the Round Table. But the saddest, fondest memories are of their king. Only a few months before they had borne him, sorely wounded, from the battle-field to the little chapel by the lake, and when they knew that he must die, had tenderly carried him to the margin of the meer, had seen the dusky barge slowly approach the shore, had tearfully entrusted his loved form to the three queens with crowns of gold, and had heard these parting words of his—"Farewell, I am going a long way with these thou seest, to the valley of Avalon, where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow, or ever wind blows loudly; but it lies deep-meadowed, happy, fair with orchard lawns and bowery hollows crowned with summer sea, where I will heal me of my grievous wound."

Long had they stood, revolving many memories, watching the barge, with oar and sail, move slowly from the brink till the hull looked like one black dot against the verge of dawn. Slowly and sadly they had returned to their deserted hall, and in the first agony of their grief had vowed, by his dear memory, to seek, by land

and sea, the Holy Grail, and cease not till they found it.

And now they stand upon the hill-top which divides, as it were, a former life of mingled joy and sorrow from a coming one of faithful service. Behind them lies the field of holiday tournament, the castle of feasting, and the grave of him whom they loved better than life. Before them, stretching on to where the clouds drop down their mysterious folds, and even through them, lies the narrow path of duty which they are henceforth to tread urged on by their reverent memory of him, who can now lead them only by his undying memories and living spirit. And so their thoughts of the past are mingled with bright hopes for the future. They are to seek in all climes for the Holy Grail, and before them rise visions of the battles they hope to win, the gallant deeds they are determined to achieve; but brightest and best of all is the hope of finding the Holy Vessel of the Grail.

At last the adventurous train moved on, their banners fluttering in the wind, their armor flashing in the sun, and their faces resolutely turned from the pleasant land they were leaving.

And so, year after year, through repeated disappointments and trying unsuccess, they struggled on in the fulfilment of their sacred vow. Scorning the attractions of other pursuits, consecrating all their energies of body and soul to the holy work upon which they had

entered, and following always the example of their king, they left for themselves the record of lives truly kingly—wonderful evidences of the strength and nobleness which a single purpose, if only it be pure and lofty, ever gives to even the humblest efforts of men.

To-day we stand here like those knights. *Our* Round Table, after four happy years of cheerful companionship, must be dissolved ; we must bid adieu to *our* noble Camelot, and gird on our armor for the life struggle which lies before us. We too look back upon the pleasant land we are leaving. There lie the bright fields of youth, and through the years that are gone come floating up, like peals of soft-tolling bells, memories we cannot, would not forget. We too think of our loved classmate who was laid to rest one bright September day. We think of *our* King Arthur who was called home in the very flush of his brilliant manhood.

Why our noble leader was taken from us, just when we seemed to need him most—God only knows. We, like the knights of the olden time, are left to enter without him upon our quest in the untried regions of the future, where abide our fortunes. All the pain and sorrow of parting—of breaking up our Round Table—is doubled, trebled, because he is not here to give us his parting blessing.

But we too, like them, have bright hopes as well as sad memories. In fancy we see before us the ranges of Hope's haloed mountain-tops towering above a

verdant land, white with harvests of honors, happiness, and placid life.

But if the prospect is enchanting, the retrospect is full of a sadder, a more potent charm, which makes us reluctant to say good-bye.

CLASSMATES: We are gathered for the last time. Never again, as a class, shall we pass together to the recitation or assemble in this room. The hour has come for us to bid farewell to each other and to the school which we have so learned to love. Very soon the reality of our school days will dwindle away into the dimness of the past, as the turrets of Camelot's fair halls faded from the sight of those cavaliers who were starting in quest of the Holy Grail; but often in the heat of life's conflict will come back to us the memory of these days, and of these friends whom we are leaving—friends more generous and disinterested than we shall ever find again. We shall learn that the world is not all serenity and calm; perfect happiness will evade us as the Holy Grail baffled the search of those knights. But let us remember which one of them approached nearest to the object of his hopes—it was the knight who girded on the pure white armor and lived a life of purity in thought, word, and deed. Amid all the "dust" of this world's conflict, let us keep undimmed our faith in the good and the true, and in the promise of fadeless honor in the world to come—forgetting not the *palma* of victory which the ransomed

of the Lord will wave in the courts of his eternal temple, or the crowns to be given at last to each faithful soldier of the cross.

We are not as many now as when we entered upon our High School life, four short years ago; nearly twice as many as our present number are away. Some have left us to join a preceding class, many have already gone to seek their fortunes here and there in our broad land, while one has gone a long way, even to "the undiscovered country." With full ranks and high hopes we entered upon this last and happiest year of our school life. But with the "melancholy days," with the "death of the flowers," one of our number left us—the gentle spirit of our classmate Arthur Snow opened to the bloom of the immortal life. The old year died away with its requiems for our departed one; but the new year had scarce dawned when our beloved Principal,—*our* noble King Arthur, left us and walked in Paradise. Ah! we had never realized before how tenderly we loved him, how highly we respected his noble manhood, how dependent we were upon him. Oh! how loth we were to give him up! In our first selfish grief we cried, "We *cannot* let him go"—but God knew best.

In bidding him our last tearful farewell we felt indeed that we were parting from a guide, a pattern, and a friend, one for whom our reverence was largely blended with affection. My classmates, it needs no words of mine to tell how we have missed his smile of benedic-

tion, his words of love which were always so powerful to teach us the inspiration of well-doing. We shall ever hold in grateful memory his noble example and patient teachings, and may we never forget that sublimest of all lessons which we have learned of him—how beautifully majesty of intellect may be united with humility of faith. O, let us try to follow his noble example, though it be imperfectly, and may his memory ever nerve us on to greater bravery and faithfulness, so that thinking on him and girding our hearts with silent fortitude, "suffering, yet hoping all things," we may one day walk beside him in the light of the imperial Salem, never more to say farewell.

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